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THE
WORKS
OF
HUGH KELLY.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED
THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

L O N D O N:

Printed for the AUTHOR'S WIDOW;
And sold by T. CADELL, in the Strand; J. RIDLEY, in St. James's
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M,DCC,LXXVIII.

THE
 OF
 MR. HUGH
 KELLY



It is an observation equally common and just. That the life of a writer consists chiefly in an account of his works. The circles which men of genius move in, who cultivate the mind to literary pursuits, are generally very narrow, and the elements of domestic life are so minute and uninteresting, and delicate to him to be remembered, that a detail of them cannot be expected to afford much entertainment to the impatient and intelligent reader.

Mr. Kelly was a native of Ireland, being born on the banks of the much celebrated lake of Killarney, in the year 1739. His father was a gentleman of good family in that county, whose fortune being reduced, not by misconduct, but by a series of unforeseen misfortunes, he was obliged to repair to Dublin, in order to seek work to support himself, &c. &c. He gave up his education, however, a very respectable school.

T H E
L I F E
O F

Mr. H U G H K E L L Y.

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Mr. KELLY was a native of Ireland, being born on the banks of the much celebrated lake of Killarney, in the year 1739. His father was a gentleman of good family in that country, whose fortune being reduced, not by misconduct, but by a series of unforeseen misfortunes, he was obliged to repair to Dublin, in order to endeavour to support himself by his personal industry. He gave our Author, however, a very tolerable

school education; but the narrowness of his finances would not permit him to indulge his son's natural propensity to study, by placing him in the higher schools of Dublin. He was therefore bound apprentice to a staymaker, an employment we may naturally suppose but ill suited to his inclination; he nevertheless continued with his master till the expiration of his apprenticeship, and then set out for London, in order to procure a livelihood by his business. This was in the year 1760.

On his arrival in the capital, he found it very difficult to get employment, and of course was reduced to the utmost distress for the means of subsistence. In this forlorn situation, a stranger, and friendless, he used sometimes to endeavour to forget his misfortunes, and passed some of his heavy hours at a public house in Ruffel Street, Covent Garden, much resorted to by the young players belonging to the theatres royal. Having an uncommon share of good humour, and being lively, cheerful, and engaging in his behaviour, he soon attracted the notice, not only of these gentlemen, but of a set of honest tradesmen who frequented that house every evening, and who were much entertained with his wit and his vivacity.

In a little time Mr. KELLY became so well acquainted with the characters of the club, that he was enabled to give a humorous description of them in one of the daily papers; and the likenesses were so well executed as to draw their attention, and excite their curiosity to discover the author. Their suspicions soon fixed on Mr. KELLY, and from that time he became distinguished among them as a man of parts and consideration.

MR. HUGH KELLY.

One of the members of the society, in particular, an attorney of some reputation in his profession, being much pleased with Mr. KELLY's company and conversation, made particular enquiry into his history, and soon learnt that he was worthy of a better situation than that in which Fortune had placed him. He therefore invited him to his house, and employed him in copying and transcribing, an occupation which Mr. KELLY prosecuted with so much assiduity, that he earned about three guineas a-week; an income which, compared to what he had been hitherto able to procure, might be deemed affluent. But this employment, though profitable, it may be easily imagined, could not long be agreeable to a man of his original genius, and lively turn of mind. From his accidental acquaintance with some booksellers, he, in 1762, became the Editor of the *Lady's Museum*, the *Court Magazine*, and other periodical publications, in which he wrote so many original essays, and pretty pieces of poetry, that his fame was quickly spread among that fraternity, and he now found himself fully employed in various branches of that transitory kind of literature; in the prosecution of which, he exerted himself with the most unwearied industry, being then lately married, and having an increasing family, whose sole dependance was upon his personal labour.

It is not necessary, and it is perhaps impossible to enumerate the variety of business he found means to execute: we shall only take notice of some of the most celebrated of his performances. About this time he began to write many political pamphlets, and among the rest, *A Vindication of Mr. Pitt's Administration*, which Lord Chesterfield makes honourable mention of in the second volume of his Letters*, lately published.

* Letter CLXXVIII. Page 505.

In 1767, the *Babler* appeared in two pocket volumes, which had at first been inserted in *Owen's Weekly Chronicle* in single papers: as did the *Memoirs of a Magdalene*, under the title of *Louisa Mildmay*. About this time also, perceiving that Churchill's reputation had been much raised by his criticism of the Stage in the *Rasclad*, Mr. KELLY produced his *Tbespis*, by much the most spirited of his poetic compositions, in which he dealt about his satire and panegyric with great freedom and acuteness.

It is somewhat singular, that while Mr. KELLY was making this severe attack upon the merits of the leading performers at our theatres, which had so great an effect upon the feelings of Mrs. Barry and Mrs. Clive, that they both for some time refused to perform in any of his pieces, he was actually writing for the Stage; for in 1768, his Comedy of *False Delicacy* made its appearance, and was received with such universal applause, as at once established his reputation as a dramatic writer, and procured him a distinguished rank among the wits of the age. The sale of this comedy was exceedingly rapid and great, and it was repeatedly performed, throughout Britain and Ireland, to crowded audiences. Nor was its reputation confined to the British dominions: It was translated into most of the modern languages; viz. into Portuguese, by command of the Marquis de Pombal, and acted with great applause at the public theatre at Lisbon; into French by the celebrated Madame Ricoboni; into the same language by another hand, at the Hague; into Italian at Paris, where it was acted at the Theatre de la Comedie Italienne; and into German.

The success of this Play induced Mr. KELLY to continue to write for the Stage; and he soon produced another Comedy, entitled

entitled *A Word to the Wife*; which, on a report then current, that he was employed to write in defence of the measures of Administration, met with a very illiberal reception; for, by a party who had previously determined on its damnation, after an uncommon uproar, it was most undeservedly driven from the Theatre. Of this treatment he severely complains in an *Address to the Public* prefixed to an edition of that Play, soon after published by subscription, before which above a thousand respectable names appear as his encouragers. Thus, though the pride of the Poet must certainly have been hurt by so unexpected a reception of his Play on the Stage; by its publication his fortune was improved, and his friends were considerably increased.

The ill fate of the *Word to the Wife* cast no damp on the ardour of our Poet in the prosecution of theatric fame; and as his friends were strongly of opinion, that his genius excelled in the Sentimental and Pathetic, he was persuaded to make a trial of it in Tragedy, and soon after presented the Public with *Clementina*. In 1774, under the patronage of Mr. Justice Addington, who kindly helped to conceal the name of the real Author, by lending his own to that performance, he produced his *School for Wives*. By this manœuvre he sily stole a march upon the Critics, who had not yet forgot their resentment; for the Play was prepared for the Stage, and represented, without the least discovery of his relation to it; though they had all along pretended to be perfectly well acquainted with Mr. KELLY's stile and manner of writing. However, after the character of the Play was fully established, and any farther concealment became unnecessary, Mr. Addington very genteelly, in a public advertisement, re-
signed

signed his borrowed plumes, and the real Author was invested with that share of reputation he was thence entitled to.

But, whilst Mr. KELLY was employed in these theatric pursuits, he was too wise to depend solely on their precarious success for the support of his family. He had therefore, some years before this period, resolved to study the Law, had become a member of the Society of the Middle Temple, and was called to the Bar so early as the year 1774. His proficiency in that science was such as afforded the most promising hopes, that, had he lived, he would in a little time have made a distinguished figure in that profession.

His next production was the Farce of a *Romance of an Hour*, which made its appearance about this time. This performance, though borrowed from Marmontel, he so perfectly naturalised, that it bears every mark of an original.

The Comedy of *The Man of Reason* followed this piece of genuine humour, but was attended with less success than any of his former productions. This Play, it must be acknowledged, was not only inferior to his other works, but was supposed to have suffered greatly by the misconception of the Actor who performed the principal character in it. The curtain, however, dropped upon this last of his dramatic productions with evident marks of general approbation, which made him with the less regret withdraw it; for he clearly saw, that the further perseverance of his friends in its favour would only serve to rekindle those embers of party resentment, which, though they had been of late smothered, were by no means totally extinguished.

Unhappily

MR. HUGH KELLY.

ix

Unhappily for our Author and his family, the sedentary life, to which his constant labour subjected him, proved the bane of his health; for early in the year 1777, an abscess, formed in his side, after a few days illness, put a period to his life on the 3d day of February, at his house in Gough-Square, in the thirty-eighth year of his age.

He left behind him a widow and five children, of the last of which she was delivered about a month after his death.

Mr. KELLY's stature was below the middle size. His complexion was fair, and his constitution rather inclined to corpulency; but he was remarkably cheerful, and a most pleasing and facetious companion. Though very fond of talking where he found his conversation agreeable, he was so well bred, as to listen to others with the most becoming attention. As a husband and a father his conduct was singularly exemplary; nor can we give a more lively proof of his domestic happiness than in a copy of verses * written in the year 1762, in which, as well as in other little Poems, he celebrates his Wife under the name of MIRA.

Nor were his attention and benevolence confined to his own family, for his hand was ever ready to relieve the distresses of the unfortunate; and such was the well-known humanity of his nature, that even whilst he was himself struggling under difficulties, it is almost incredible how many applications were successfully made to him from the poor and needy. He had so large a portion of genuine good-nature, that he was never known to give the least offence, nor could he be, but with ex-

treme difficulty, provoked with the impertinence of others; being always disposed to treat every body with the utmost candour and affability.

As a Writer, his genius must be allowed to have been uncommon, when it is considered under what pressures of fortune most of his performances were written, and with what rapidity they were ushered into the world; some of which, could he have afforded leisure to polish, would have justly ranked among the best productions of this age, so fertile in works of taste and erudition.

Soon after his death, his Comedy of *A Word to the Wife* was acted at Covent-Garden Theatre for the benefit of his widow and children, to which that illustrious ornament of this country, the no less humane than ingenious Dr. SAMUEL JOHNSON, wrote the following occasional Prologue; some lines of which, we will venture to assert, are not inferior to any that ever dropped even from his own elegant and nervous pen.

THIS night presents a Play, which public rage,
Or right or wrong, once hooted from the stage:
From zeal or malice now no more we dread,
For English vengeance *warms not with the dead.*
A generous foe regards with pitying eye
The man whom Fate has laid—where all must lie.
To wit, reviving from its Author's dust
Be kind, ye judges, or at least be just:
Let no renew'd hostilities invade
Th' oblivious Grave's inviolable shade.
Let one great payment every claim appease,
And him who cannot hurt, allow to please;

To

To please by scenes unconscious of offence,
 By harmless merriment, or useful sense.
 Where aught of bright or fair the Piece displays,
 Approve it only—'tis too late to praise.
 If want of skill or want of care appear,
 Forbear to hiss—the Poet cannot hear.
 By all, like him, must praise and blame be found,
 At last, a fleeting gleam, or empty sound,
 Yet then shall calm Reflection bless the night,
 When liberal Pity dignify'd Delight;
 When Pleasure fired her torch at Virtue's flame,
 And Mirth was Bounty with an humbler name.

S U B-

And Mirth was Bountiful with an hundred names,
 When Pleasure died her couch at Virtue's flame,
 When Beauty's eye'd delight,
 Her then shall calm reflection bless the night,
 At last, a fleeting gleam, or empty sound,
 Shall like him, small praise and blame be found,
 To bear no tale—the Poet cannot hear,
 If want of skill or want of care appear,
 Approve it only—'tis too late to write,
 Where ought to bright or still the Poet write,
 By far the truest, or the least,
 To please by honest unobscured of offence.

Mr. Atkins.

John Brown

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VII

DAVID CHARLES

Part I

FALSE DELICACY:

C O M E D Y.

A

B

FALSE DELICACY

C O M E D Y

P R O T O
DAVID GARRICK, Esq.

Dear SIR,

I HAVE two motives for inscribing this piece to you,
Gratitude and Vanity; Gratitude, because it's suc-
cess has been greatly owing to your judicious advice; and
Vanity, because I wish to acquaint the world that such a
character as Mr. Garrick has been warmly the friend of
his sincerely affectionate,

And very much obliged,

Middle Temple,
Jan. 29, 1768.

Humble Servant,

HUGH KELLY.

P. O. BOX 100
DAVID GARFIELD, Esq.

Dear Sir,

I HAVE two motives for inscribing this poem to you. Gratitude and Veneration; Gratitude, because the poet has been greatly owing to your judicious advice; and Veneration, because I wish to perpetuate the world that such a character as Mr. Garfield has been among the friends of his country's institutions.

And very much obliged,

Humble Servant,

Wm. Temple
Jan. 22, 1782.

Hoon Kalliv.

P R O L O G U E.

Written by DAVID GARRICK, Esq. *

Spoken by Mr. K. I. N. G.

I'M vex'd—quite vex'd—and you'll be vex'd—that's worse
To deal with stubborn scribblers! *there's the curse!*
Write moral plays—the blockhead!—why, good people,
You'll soon expect this house to wear a steeple!
For our fine piece, to let you into facts,
Is quite a Sermon,—only preach'd in Acts.
You'll scarce believe me, 'till the proof appears,
But even I, Tom Fool, must shed some tears:
Do, Ladies, look upon me,—nay, no simp'ring—
Think you this face was ever made for whim'ring?
Can I, a cambrick handkerchief display,—
Thump my unfeeling breast, and roar away?
Why this is comical, perhaps he'll say—
Resolving this strange awkward bard to pump,
I ask'd him what he meant?—He, somewhat plump,
New purs'd his belly, and his lips thus biting,
I must keep up the dignity of writing!
You may; but, if you do, Sir, I must tell ye,
You'll not keep up that dignity of belly.
Still he preach'd on.—“Bards of a former age
Held up abandon'd pictures on the stage,
Spread out their wit, with fascinating art,
And catch'd the fancy, to corrupt the heart;
But, happy change!—in these more moral days,
You cannot sport with virtue, even in plays;

* Mr. Kelly originally intended the prologue to be grave, and accordingly wrote a serious one himself; but as Mr. King was to speak it, Mr. Garrick, with great propriety, thought a piece of humour would be best suited to the talents of that excellent actor, and therefore very kindly took the trouble of putting it into a form so entirely different from the first, that it cannot, with the least justice, be attributed to any other author.

On virtue's side his pen the poet draws,
 And boldly asks a hearing for his cause."
*Thus did he prance, and swell.—The man may prate,
 And feed these whimsies in his addle pate,
 That you'll protect his muse, because she's good,
 A virgin, and so chaste!—O lud! O lud!
 No Muse the Critic Beadle's lash escapes,
 Though virtuous, if a dowdy, and a trapez:
 If his come forth, a decent likely Lass,
 You'll speak her fair, and grant the proper pass.
 Or should his brain be turn'd with wild pretences;
 In three hours time, you'll bring him to his senses:
 And well you may, when in your power you get him,
 In that short space, you blister, bleed, and sweat him.
 Among the Turks, indeed, he'd run no danger,
 They sacred hold a madman, and a stranger.*

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

Colonel Rivers,	Mr. HOLLAND.
Cecil,	Mr. KING.
Sir Harry Newburg,	Mr. J. PALMER.
Lord Winworth,	Mr. REDDISH.
Sidney,	Mr. CAUTHERLY.
Footmen, Mr. Wright, &c.	

W O M E N.

Lady Betty Lambton,	Mrs. ABINGTON.
Miss Marchmont,	Mrs. BADDELEY.
Miss Rivers,	Mrs. JEFFERIES.
Mrs. Harley,	Mrs. DANCER.
Sally,	Miss REYNOLDS.

S C E N E, *Richmond.*TIME, *The Time of Representation.*

FALSE DELICACY.

ACT I, SCENE I.

An Apartment at Lady BETTY LAMBTON'S.

Enter SIDNEY and WINWORTH.

Sidney. **S**TILL I can't help thinking that Lady Betty Lambton's refusal was infinitely more the result of an extraordinary delicacy, than the want of affection for your Lordship.

Winworth. O, my dear cousin, you are very much mistaken; I am not one of those coxcombs who imagine a woman doesn't know her own mind; or who, because they were treated with civility by a lady who has rejected their addresses, suppose she is secretly debating in their favour: Lady Betty is a woman of sense, and must consequently despise coquetry or affectation.

Sidney. Why, she always speaks of you with the greatest respect.

Winworth. Respect!—Why she always speaks of *you* with the greatest respect; does it therefore follow that she loves you? No, Charles—I have, for some time you know, ceas'd to trouble Lady Betty with my solicitations; and I see myself honour'd with her friendship, though I hav'n't been so happy as to merit her heart: for this reason, I have no doubt of her assistance on the present occasion, and, I am certain, I shall please her by making my addresses to Miss Marchmont.

Sidney. Miss Marchmont is, indeed, a very deserving young woman.

Winworth. Next to Lady Betty I never saw one so form'd to my wishes; besides, during the whole period of my fruitless attendance, she seemed so interested for my success, and express'd so hearty a concern for my disappointment, that I have consider'd her with an eye of more than common friendship ever since.—But what's the matter with you, Charles? you seem to have something upon your spirits.

Sidney. Indeed, my Lord, you are mistaken: I am only attentive.

Winworth. O, is that all!—This very day I purpose to request Lady Betty's interest with Miss Marchmont; for, unhappily circumstanc'd as she is, with regard to fortune, she possesses an uncommon share of delicacy, and may possibly think herself insulted by the offer of a rejected heart:—Lady Betty, in that case, will save her the pain of a supposed disrespect, and me the mortification of a new repulse. But I beg your pardon, Charles, I am forgetting the cause of friendship, and shall now step up stairs to Colonel Rivers about your affair.—Ah, Sidney! you have no difficulties to obstruct the completion of your wishes, and a few days must make you one of the happiest men in England. [Exit.

Sidney. [looking after him.] A few days make me one of the happiest men in England!—a likely matter, truly: little does he know how passionately I admire the very woman to whom he is immediately going with an offer of his person and fortune.—The marriage with Miss Rivers, I see, is unavoidable; and I am almost pleas'd that I never obtained any encouragement from Miss Marchmont, as I should now be reduc'd to the painful alternative, either of giving up my own hopes, or of opposing the happiness of such a friend.

Enter Mrs. HARLEY and Miss MARCHMONT.

Mrs. Harley. O here, my dear girl, is the sweet swain, in propria persona:—Only mind what a funeral-sermon face the creature has, notwithstanding the agreeable prospects before him.—Well, of all things in the world, defend me, I say, from a sober husband!

Sidney. You are extremely welcome, Mrs. Harley, to divert yourself—

Mrs. Harley. He speaks too in as melancholy a tone as a passing-bell:—Lord, lord, what can Colonel Rivers see in the wretch, to think of him for a son-in-law.—Only look, Miss Marchmont, at this love-exciting countenance!—Observe the Cupids that ambush in these eyes!—These lips, to be sure, are fraught with the honey of Hybla:—Go, you lifeless devil you,—go, try to get a little animation into this unfortunate face of yours.

Sidney. Upon my word, my face is very much oblig'd to you.

Miss Marchmont. You are a mad creature, my dear; and yet I envy your spirits prodigiously.

Mrs.

Mrs. Harley. And so you ought.—But for all that, you and Lady Betty are unaccountably fond of those half-soul'd fellows, who are as mechanically regular as so many pieces of clock-work, and never strike above once an hour upon a new observation—who are so sentimental, and so dull—so wise, and so drowsy.—Why I thought Lady Betty had already a sufficient quantity of lead in her family, without taking in this lump to increase the weight of it.

Miss Marchmont. What can she possibly mean, Mr. Sidney?

Sidney. 'Tis impossible to guess, Madam. The lively widow will still have her laugh without sparing any body.

Mrs. Harley. Why surely, my dear, you can't forget the counter-part of poor Dismal here, that elaborate piece of dignified dulness, Lady Betty's cousin, Lord Hectic; who, through downright fondness, is continually plaguing his poor wife, and rendering her the most miserable woman in the world, from an extraordinary desire of promoting her happiness.

Miss Marchmont. And isn't there a great deal to say in extenuation of an error which proceeds from a principle of real affection?

Mrs. Harley. Affection! ridiculous! but you shall have an instance of this wonderful affection:—T'other day I din'd at his house; and, though the weather was intolerably warm, the table was laid in a close room, with a fire large enough to roast an ox for a country corporation.

Sidney. Well, and so——

Mrs. Harley. In a great chair, near the fire-side, sat poor Lady Hectic, wrapp'd up in as many fur-cloaks as would baffle the severity of winter in Siberia:—On my entrance I express'd a proper concern for her illness, and ask'd the nature of her complaint.—She told me she complain'd of nothing but the weight of her dress, and the intolerable heat of the apartment; adding, that she had been caught in a little shower the preceding evening, which terrified Lord Hectic out of his wits; and so, for fear she might run the chance of a slight cold, he expos'd her to the hazard of absolute suffocation.

Sidney. Upon my word, Miss Marchmont, she has a pretty manner of turning things.

Miss Marchmont. Really, I think so.

C

Mrs.

Mrs. Harley. Well—unable to bear either the tyranny of this preposterous fondness any longer, or the intolerable heat of his room, I made my escape the moment the cloth was removed; and shan't be surprised if, before the conclusion of the summer, he is brought before his peers, for having murdered his poor lady, out of downright affection.

Sidney. A very uncommon death, *Mrs. Harley*, among people of quality.

Enter a Footman.

[*Footman to Sidney.*] Lord Winworth, Sir, desires the favour of your company above: The person is come with the writings from the Temple—

Sidney. I'll wait upon him immediately.

Mrs. Harley. Ay, pray do, you are the fittest company in the world for each other.—If Colonel Rivers was of my mind, he'd turn you instantly adrift, and listen to the overtures of Sir Harry Newburg.

Sidney. I really believe you have a fancy to me yourself, you're so constantly abusing me. [Exit.

Mrs. Harley. I, you odious creature!

Miss Marchmont. Now you mention Sir Harry, my dear, isn't it rather extraordinary for him to think of Miss Rivers, when he knows of the engagements between her and Mr. Sidney—especially as her father has such an objection to the wildness of his character.

Mrs. Harley. What, you are still at your sober reflections, I see, and are for scrutinizing into the morals of a lover.—The women truly would have a fine time of it, if they were never to be married till they found men of unexceptionable characters.

Miss Marchmont. Nay, I don't want to lessen Sir Harry's merit in the least,—he has his good qualities as well as his faults,—and is no way destitute of understanding;—but still his understanding is a fashionable one, and pleads the knowledge of every thing right to justify the practice of many things not strictly warrantable.

Mrs. Harley. Why, I never heard any thing to his prejudice, but some fashionable liberties which he has taken with the ladies.

Miss Marchmont. And, in the name of wonder, what would you desire to hear!

Mrs.

Mrs. Harley. Come, come, Hortensia, we women are unaccountable creatures, the greatest number of us by much love a fellow for having a little modish wildness about him; and if we are such fools as to be captivated with the vices of the men, we ought to be punished for the depravity of our sentiments.

Enter RIVERS and Lady BETTY.

Rivers. I tell you, sister, they can read the parchments very well without our assistance—and I have been so fatigued with looking over papers all the morning, that I am heartily sick of your indentures witnessing, your forasmuch's, likewise's, also's, moreover's, and notwithstanding's, and I must take a turn in the garden to recover myself. [*Exit.*]

Lady Betty. Nay, I only spoke, because I imagin'd our being present would be more agreeable to Lord Winworth.—But I wonder Sir Harry doesn't come; he promised to be here by ten, and I want to see his cousin Cecil mightily.

Miss Marchmont. What, Lady Betty, does Mr. Cecil come with him here this morning?

Lady Betty. He does, my dear—he arrived at Sir Harry's last night, and I want to see if his late journey to France has any way improved the elegance of his appearance. [*Ironically.*]

Mrs. Harley. Well, I shall be glad to see him too; for, notwithstanding his disregard of dress, and freedom of manner—there is a something right in him that pleases me prodigiously.

Miss Marchmont. A something right, Mrs. Harley!—he is one of the worthiest creatures in the world.

Lady Betty. O, Hortensia, he ought to be a favourite of yours, for I don't know any body who possesses a higher place in his good opinion.

Miss Marchmont. 'Twould be odd, indeed, if he wasn't a favourite of mine—he was my father's best friend;—gave him a considerable living, you know; and, when he died, would have provided very kindly for me, if your generosity, Lady Betty, hadn't render'd his goodness wholly unnecessary.

Lady Betty. Poh! poh! no more of this!

Mrs. Harley. I wish there was a possibility of making him dress like a gentleman.—But I am glad he comes with Sir Harry;—for though they have a great regard for each other, they are continually wrangling, and form a contrast which is often extremely diverting.—

Enter a Footman.

Sir Harry Newburg and Mr. Cecil, Madam.

Lady Betty. O, here they are! Shew them in. *[Exit Footman.]*

Mrs. Harley. Now for it!

Miss Marchmont. Hush, they are here.

Sir Harry. Ladies your most obedient.—

Cecil. Ah, Girls!—give me a kiss each of you instantly.—*Lady Betty.* I am heartily glad to see you:—I have a budget full of compliments for you, from several of your friends at Paris—

Lady Betty. Did you meet any of them at Paris?

Cecil. I did,—and, what is worse, I met them in every town I passed through:—But the English are a great commercial nation, you know, and their fools, like their broad cloths, are exported in large quantities to all parts of Europe.

Sir Harry. What? and they found you a fool so much above the market price, that they have returned you upon the hands of your country?—Here, ladies, is a head for you, piping hot from Paris.

Cecil. And here, ladies, is a head for you, like the Alps.

Sir Harry. Like the Alps, ladies! How do you make that out?

Cecil. Why 'tis always white, and always barren; 'tis constantly covered with snow, but never produces any thing profitable.

Mrs. Harley. O say no more upon that head, I beseech you.

Lady Betty. Indeed Sir Harry, I think they're too hard upon you.

Mrs. Harley. Why, I think so too—especially my friend Cecil, who, with that unfortunate shock of hair, has no great right to be consider'd as a standard for dress in this country.

Cecil. Ah, widow, there are many heads in this country with much more extraordinary things upon them than my unfortunate shock of hair, as you call it:—what do you think of these wings, for instance, that cover the ears of my cousin Mercury?

Sir Harry. Death! don't spoil my hair.

Cecil.

Cecil. You see this fellow is so tortur'd upon the wheel of fashion, that a single touch immediately throws him into agonies;—now, my dress is as easy as 'tis simple, and five minutes—

Sir Harry. With the help of your five fingers equips you at any time for the drawing-room,—ha! ha! ha!

Cecil. And isn't it better than being five hours under the paws of your hair-dresser?

Lady Betty. But custom, Mr. Cecil!

Cecil. Men of sense have nothing to do with custom; and 'tis more their business to set wise examples than to follow foolish ones.

Mrs. Harley. But don't you think the world will be apt to laugh a little, Mr. Cecil?

Cecil. I can't help the want of understanding among mankind.

Sir Harry. The blockhead thinks there's nothing due to the general opinion of one's country.

Cecil. And none but blockheads, like you, would mind the foolish opinions of any country.

Lady Betty. Well! Mr. Cecil must take his own way, I think:—so come along, ladies,—let us go into the garden, and send my brother to Sir Harry, to settle the business about Theodora.

Cecil. Theodora!—what a charming name for the romance of a circulating library!—I wonder, Lady Betty, your brother wou'dn't call his girl Deborah, after her grandmother?—

Mrs. Harley. Deborah!—O, I should hate such an old fashion'd name abominably.

Cecil. And I hate this new fashion of calling our children by pompous appellations.—By and by we shan't have a Ralph or a Roger, a Bridget or an Alice, remaining in the kingdom.—The dregs of the people have adopted this unaccountable custom; and a fellow who keeps a little alehouse at the bottom of my avenue in the country, has no less than an Augustus Frederick, a Scipio Africanus, and a Matilda-Wilhelmina-Leonora, in his family.

Mrs. Harley. Upon my word, a very pretty string of Christian names.

Lady Betty. Well, Sir Harry, you and Mr. Cecil dine with us.—Come, ladies, let us go to the garden.

Mrs.

Mrs. Harley. I positively won't go without Mr. Cecil, for I must have somebody to laugh at.

Cecil. And so must I, widow; therefore I won't lose this opportunity of being in your company.

[*Exeunt Ladies, and followed by CECIL who meets RIVERS entering.*]

Cecil. Ah, Colonel, I am heartily glad to see you.

Rivers. My dear Cecil, you are welcome home again.

Cecil. There's my wife kinsman wants a word with you. [Exit.]

Sir Harry. Colonel, your most obedient:—I am come upon the old business;—for unless I am allow'd to entertain hope of Miss Rivers, I shall be the most miserable of human beings.

Rivers. Sir Harry, I have already told you by letter; and I now tell you personally, I cannot listen to your proposals.

Sir Harry. No, Sir?

Rivers. No, Sir,—I have promised my daughter to Mr. Sidney;—do you know that, Sir?

Sir Harry. I do;—but what then? Engagements of this kind, you know—

Rivers. So then, you do know I promised her to Mr. Sidney?

Sir Harry. I do;—but I also know, that matters are not finally settled between Mr. Sidney and you; and I moreover know, that his fortune is by no means equal to mine: therefore—

Rivers. Sir Harry, let me ask you one question, before you make your consequence.

Sir Harry. A thousand, if you please, Sir.

Rivers. Why then, Sir, let me ask you, what you have ever observed in me, or my conduct, that you desire me so familiarly to break my word?—I thought, Sir, you consider'd me as a man of honour.

Sir Harry. And so I do, Sir, a man of the nicest honour.

Rivers. And yet, Sir, you ask me to violate the sanctity of my word;—and tell me, indirectly, that it is my interest to be a rascal—

Sir Harry. I really don't understand you, Colonel:—I thought, when I was talking to you, I was talking to a man who knew the world;—and, as you have not yet signed—

Rivers. Why, this is mending matters with a witness!—And so you think, because I am not legally bound, I am under no necessity of keep-

ing

ing my word!—Sir Harry, laws were never made for men of honour;—they want no bond but the rectitude of their own sentiments, and laws are of no use but to bind the villains of society.

Sir Harry. Well! but my dear Colonel, if you have no regard for me, shew some little regard for your daughter.

Rivers. Sir Harry, I shew the greatest regard for my daughter by giving her to a man of honour;—and I must not be insulted with any farther repetition of your proposals.

Sir Harry. Insult you, Colonel!—Is the offer of my alliance an insult?—Is my readiness to make what settlements you think proper—

Rivers. Sir Harry, I should consider the offer of a kingdom an insult, if it was to be purchased by the violation of my word:—Besides, though my daughter shall never go a beggar to the arms of her husband, I wou'd rather see her happy than rich; and if she has enough to provide handsomely for a young family, and something to spare for the exigencies of a worthy friend, I shall think her as affluent as if she was mistress of Mexico.

Sir Harry. Well, Colonel, I have done;—but I believe—

Rivers. Well, Sir Harry, and as our conference is done, we will, if you please, retire to the ladies:—I shall be always glad of your acquaintance, though I can't receive you as a son-in-law;—for a union of interest I look upon as a union of dishonour; and consider a marriage for money, at best, but a legal prostitution. [Exeunt.

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

A C T II.

S C E N E, a Garden.

Enter Lady BETTY and Mrs. HARLEY.

Mrs. Harley. **L**ORD, Lord, my dear you're enough to drive one
ley. out of one's wits.—I tell you, again and again, he's as
 much yours as ever; and was I in your situation, he shou'd be my
 husband to-morrow morning.

Lady Betty. Dear Emmy, you mistake the matter strangely.—Lord
 Winwor this no common man; nor wou'd he have continued his silence
 so long upon his favourite subject, if he had the least inclination to re-
 new his addresses.—His pride has justly taken the alarm at my insensi-
 bility; and he will not, I am satisfied, run the hazard of another refusal.

Mrs. Harley. Why then, in the name of wonder, if he was so dear
 to you, could you prodigally trifle with your own happiness, and re-
 peatedly refuse him?

Lady Betty. I have repeatedly told you, because I was a fool, Emmy.
 —Till he withdrew his addresses, I knew not how much I esteemed
 him; my unhappiness in my first marriage, you know, made me re-
 solve against another.—And you are also sensible I have frequently
 argued, that a woman of real delicacy shou'd never admit a second im-
 pression on her heart.

Mrs. Harley. Yes, and I always thought you argued very foolishly.
 —I am sure I ought to know, for I have been twice married;—and
 though I lov'd my first husband very sincerely, there was not a woman
 in England who cou'd have made the second a better wife.—Nay, for
 that matter, if another was to offer himself to-morrow, I am not alto-
 gether certain that I should refuse listening—

Lady Betty. You are a strange creature.

Mrs. Harley. And aren't you a much stranger, in declining to fol-
 low your own inclinations, when you cou'd have consulted them so
 highly, to the credit of your good sense, and the satisfaction of your
 whole

whole family.—But it isn't yet too late; and if you will be advis'd by me, every thing shall end as happily as you can wish.

—*Lady Betty.* Well, let me hear your advice.

—*Mrs. Harley.* Why this, then:—My Lord, you know, has requested that you would indulge him with half an hour's private conversation some time this morning.

—*Lady Betty.* Well!

—*Mrs. Harley.* This is a liberty he hasn't taken these three months—and he must design something by it;—now as he can design nothing but to renew his addresses, I wou'd advise you to take him at the very first word, for fear your delicacy, if it has time to consider, shou'd again shew you the strange impropriety of second marriages.

—*Lady Betty.* But suppose this should not be his business with me?

—*Mrs. Harley.* Why then we'll go another way to work:—I, as a sanguine friend of my Lord's, can give him a distant hint of matters, exacting, at the same time, a promise of the most inviolable secrecy; and assuring him you wou'd never forgive me, if you had the least idea of my having acquainted him with so important a——

—*Lady Betty.* And so you wou'd have me—

—*Mrs. Harley.* Why not?—This is the very step I shou'd take myself, if I was in your situation.

—*Lady Betty.* May be so:—But 'tis a step which I shall never take.—What! wou'd you have me lost to all feeling? wou'd you have me meanly make use of chambermaid-artifices for a husband?

—*Mrs. Harley.* I would only have you happy, my dear:—And where the man of one's heart is at stake, I don't think we ought to stand so rigidly upon trifles.—

—*Lady Betty.* Trifles, Emmy! do you call the laws of delicacy trifles?—She that violates these——

—*Mrs. Harley.* Poh! poh! she that violates:—What a work there is with you sentimental folks.—Why, don't I tell you that my Lord shall never know any thing of your concern in the design?

—*Lady Betty.* But sha'nt I know it myself, Emmy!—and how can I escape the justice of my own reflections!

—*Mrs. Harley.* Well, thank heav'n, my sentiments are not sufficiently refin'd to make me unhappy.

Lady Betty. I can't change my sentiments, my dear Emmy,—nor wou'd I, if I cou'd:—Of this, however, be certain, that unless I have Lord Winworth without courting him, I shall never have him at all.—But be silent to all the world upon this matter, I conjure you,—particularly to Miss Marchmont: for she has been so strenuous an advocate for my Lord, that the concealment of it from her might give her some doubts of my friendship; and I shou'd be continually uneasy, for fear my reserve shou'd be consider'd as an indirect insult upon her circumstances.

Mrs. Harley. Well, the devil take this delicacy; I don't know any thing it does besides making people miserable:—And yet somehow, foolish as it is, one can't help liking it.—But yonder I see Sir Harry and Mr. Cecil.

Lady Betty. Let us withdraw then, my dear; they may detain us; and, till this interview is over, I shall be in a continual agitation; yet I am strangely apprehensive of a disappointment, Emmy—and if—[going.

Mrs. Harley. Lady Betty!

Lady Betty. What do you say?

Mrs. Harley. Do you still think there is any thing extremely preposterous in second marriages?

Lady Betty. You are intolerably provoking.—[Exit.

Enter CECIL and Sir HARRY.

Cecil. Well, didn't I tell you the moment you open'd this affair to me, that the Colonel was a man of too much sense to give his daughter to a coxcomb?

Sir Harry. But what if I shou'd tell you, that his daughter shall be still mine, and in spite of his teeth?

Cecil. Prithee explain, kinsman.

Sir Harry. Why suppose Miss Rivers should have no very strong objection to this unfortunate figure of mine?

Cecil. Why even your vanity can't think that a young lady of her good sense can possibly be in love with you?

Sir Harry. What, you think that no likely circumstance, I see?

Cecil. I do really—Formerly indeed the women were fools enough to be caught by the frippery of externals; and so a fellow neither pick'd

pick'd a pocket, nor put up with an affront, he was a dear toad—a sweet creature—and a wicked devil;—nay, the wicked devil was quite an angel of a man;—and, like another Alexander, in proportion to the number of wretches which he made, he constantly increas'd the lustre of his reputation:—till at last, having conquer'd all his worlds, he sat down with that celebrated ruffian, and wept because he cou'd commit no farther outrages upon society.

Sir Harry. O, my good moralizing cousin, you'll find yourself cursedly out in your politics; and I shall convince you in a few hours, that a handsome suit on the back of a sprightly young fellow, will still do more among the women than all your sentiment and slovenliness.

Cecil. What, wou'd you persuade me that Miss Rivers will go off with you?

Sir Harry. You have hit the mark for once in your life, my sweet-temper'd moulder of morality—The dear Theodora——

Cecil. The dear Theodora! and so, Harry, you imagine, that by the common maxims of fashionable life, you may appear to be a friend to the colonel, at the very moment you are going to rob him of his daughter.—For shame, kinsman—for shame!—have some pride, if you have no virtue—and don't smile in a man's face when you want to do him the greatest of all injuries—don't Harry—

Sir Harry. Cecil, I scorn a base action as much as you, or as much as any man—but I love Miss Rivers honourably.—I ask nothing from her father; and as her person is her own, she has a right to bestow it where she pleases.

Cecil. I am answer'd:—her person is her own—and she has a right to be miserable her own way.—I acknowledge it—and will not discover your secret to her father.—

Sir Harry. Discover it to her father!—why sure you wou'dn't think of it.—Take care, Cecil—take care—I do indeed love you better than any man in the world—and I know you have a friendship, a cordial friendship for me—but the happiness of my whole life is at stake, and must not be destroy'd by any of your unaccountable peculiarities.

Cecil. Harry—you know I wou'd at any time rather promote your happiness than obstruct it.—And you also know, that if I die without children—you shall have a principal part of my fortune;—but damn it

—I wish you had not us'd the mask of friendship to steal this young Lady away from her relations—'tis hard that their good-nature must be turn'd against their peace;—and hard, because her whole family treat you with regard, that you shou'd offer them the greatest insult imaginable.

Sir Harry. Dear Cecil, I am more to be pity'd than condemn'd in this transaction.—When I first endeavour'd to make myself agreeable to Miss Rivers, I imagin'd her family wou'd readily countenance my addresses; and when I succeeded in that endeavour, I had not time to declare myself in form, before her father enter'd into this engagement with Sidney.—The moment I heard it mention'd, I wrote to him, offering him a *carte blanche*; and this morning a repetition of my offer was treated with contempt.—I have therefore been forc'd into the measure you disapprove so much—but I hope my conduct, in the character of the son-in-law, will amply atone for any error in my behaviour as a friend.

Cecil. Well, well, we must make the best of a bad market;—her father has no right to force her inclinations;—'tis equally cruel and unjust: therefore you may depend upon my utmost endeavours not only to assist you in carrying her off, but in appeasing all family-resentments.—For, really, you are so often in the wrong, that one must stand by you a little when you are in the right:—so I shall be ready for you, kinsman.

Sir Harry. Why, Cecil, this is honest—this is really friendly—and you shall abuse me a whole twelvemonth without my answering a syllable—but for the present I must leave you—yonder I see Miss Rivers—we have some little matters to talk of—you understand me—and now—
[Exit.

Cecil. For a torrent of rapture and nonsense.—What egregious puppies does this unaccountable Love make of young fellows: Nay, for that matter, what egregious puppies does it not make of old ones?—*ecce signum.*—'Tis a comfort, though, that nobody knows I am a puppy in this respect but myself.—Here was I fancying that all the partiality I felt for poor Hortensia Marchmont proceeded from my friendship for her father;—when, upon an honest examination into my own heart,—I find it principally arises from my regard for herself.—I was in hopes a change of objects would have driven the baggage out of my thoughts,
—and

—and I went to France;—but I am come home with a settled resolution of dissuading her to marry a slovenly rascal of fifty, who is to be sure a very likely swain for a young lady to fall in love with;—but who knows!—the most sensible women have sometimes strange tastes;—and yet it must be a very strange taste, that can possibly approve of my overtures.—I'll go cautiously to work however,—and solicit her as for a friend of my own age and fortune;—so that if she refuses me, which is probable enough—I shan't expose myself to her contempt—What a ridiculous figure is an old fool sighing at the feet of a young woman!—Zounds, I wonder how the grey-headed dotards have the impudence to ask a blooming girl of twenty to throw herself away upon a moving mummy, or a walking skeleton. [Exit.]

The SCENE changes to an Apartment in Lady BETTY's House.

Enter Lady BETTY and Mrs. HARLEY.

Lady Betty. You can't think, Emmy, how my spirits are agitated;—I wonder what my Lord can want with me?

Mrs. Harley. Well, well, try and collect yourself a little—he is just coming up—I must retire.—Courage, my dear creature, this once—and the day's our own, I warrant you. [Exit.]

Enter WINWORTH, bowing very low.

Lady Betty. Here he is!—Bless me, what a flutter I am in!

Winworth. Your Ladyship's most obedient.

Lady Betty. Won't your Lordship be seated?—He seems excessively confus'd. [aside.]

Winworth. I have taken the liberty, Madam—How she awes me now I am alone with her! [aside.]

Lady Betty. My Lord!

Winworth. I say, Madam, I have taken the liberty to—

Lady Betty. I beg, my Lord, you won't consider an apology in the least—

Winworth. Your Ladyship is extremely obliging—and yet I am fearful—

Lady Betty. I hope your Lordship will consider me as a friend,—and therefore lay aside this unnecessary ceremony.

Winworth.

Winworth. I do confide in you, Madam, as a friend;—as an ineffable friend—and I am this moment come to solicit you upon a subject of the utmost importance to my happiness.

Lady Betty. [*aside.*] Lord! what is he going to say?

Winworth. Madam!—

Lady Betty. I say, my Lord, that you cannot speak to me on any subject of importance without engaging my greatest attention.

Winworth. You honour me too much, Madam.

Lady Betty. Not in the least, my Lord—for there is not a person in the world who wishes your happiness with greater cordiality.

Winworth. You eternally oblige me, Madam—and I can now take courage to tell you, that my happiness, in a most material degree, depends upon your Ladyship.

Lady Betty. On me, my Lord?—Bless me!

Winworth. Yes, Madam, on your Ladyship.

Lady Betty. [*aside.*] Mrs. Harley was right, and I shall sink with confusion.

Winworth. 'Tis on this business, Madam, I have taken the liberty of requesting the present interview,—and as I find your Ladyship so generously ready—

Lady Betty. Why, my Lord, I must confess—I say, I must acknowledge, my Lord,—that if your happiness depends upon me—I should not be very much pleas'd to see you miserable.

Winworth. Your Ladyship is benignity itself;—but as I want words to express my sense of this obligation—I shall proceed at once to my request, nor trespass upon your patience by an ineffectual compliment to your generosity.

Lady Betty. If you please, my Lord.

Winworth. Then, Madam, my request is, that I may have your consent—

Lady Betty. This is so sudden, my Lord!—so unexpected!

Winworth. Why, Madam, it is so;—yet, if I cou'd but engage your acquiescence—I might still think of a double union on the day which makes my cousin happy—

Lady Betty. My Lord—I really don't know how to answer!—Doesn't your Lordship think this is rather precipitating matters?

Winworth.

Winworth. No man, Madam, can be too speedy in promoting his happiness:—If, therefore, I might presume to hope for your concurrence—I wou'dn't altogether—

Lady Betty. My concurrence, my Lord!—since it is so essentially necessary to your peace, I cannot refuse any longer.—Your great merit will justify so immediate a compliance—and I shall stand excus'd of all—

Winworth. Then, Madam, I don't despair of the Lady's—

Lady Betty. My Lord?

Winworth. I know your Ladyship can easily prevail upon her to overlook an immaterial punctilio; and, therefore—

Lady Betty. The Lady, my Lord?

Winworth. Yes, Madam: Miss Marchmont, if she finds my addresses supported by your Ladyship, will, in all probability, be easily induced to receive them;—and then, your Ladyship knows—

Lady Betty. Miss Marchmont! my Lord!

Winworth. Yes, Madam, Miss Marchmont.—Since your final disapprobation of those hopes which I was once presumptuous enough to entertain of calling your Ladyship mine, the anguish of a rejected passion has render'd me inconceivably wretched; and I see no way of mitigating the severity of my situation, but in the esteem of this amiable woman, who knows how tenderly I have been attach'd to you, and whose goodness will induce her, I am well convinc'd, to alleviate, as much as possible, the greatness of my disappointment.

Lady Betty. Your Lordship is undoubtedly right in your opinion—and I am infinitely concern'd to have been the involuntary cause of uneasiness to you;—but Miss Marchmont, my Lord—she will merit your utmost—

Winworth. I know she will, Madam—and it rejoices me to see you so highly pleas'd with my intention.

Lady Betty. O, I am quite delighted with it.

Winworth. I knew I should please you by it.—

Lady Betty. You can't imagine how you have pleas'd me!

Winworth. How noble is this goodness!—Then, Madam, I may expect your Ladyship will be my advocate.—The injustice which Fortune has done Miss Marchmont's merit, obliges me to ask with a double degree

gree of circumspection;—for, when Virtue is unhappily plung'd into difficulties, 'tis entitled to an additional share of veneration.

Lady Betty. [*aside.*] How has my folly undone me!

Winworth. I will not trespass any longer upon your Ladyship's leisure, than just to observe, that though I have solicited your friendship on this occasion, I must, nevertheless, beg you will not be too much my friend.—I know Miss Marchmont would make any sacrifice to oblige you;—and if her gratitude should appear in the least concern'd—This is a nice point, my dear Lady Betty, and I must not wound the peace of any person's bosom, to recover the tranquillity of my own. [*Exit.*]

Enter Mrs. HARLEY, who speaks.

Well, my dear, is it all over?

Lady Betty. It is all over indeed, Emmy.

Mrs. Harley. But why that sorrowful tone—and melancholy countenance? Mustn't I wish you joy?

Lady Betty. O, I am the most miserable woman in the world!—Would you believe it?—The business of this interview was to request my interest in his favour with Miss Marchmont.

Mrs. Harley. With Miss Marchmont!—Then there is not one atom of sincere affection in the universe.

Lady Betty. As to that, I have reason to think his sentiments for me are as tender as ever.

Mrs. Harley. He gives you a pretty proof of his tenderness, truly, when he asks your assistance to marry another woman!

Lady Betty. Had you but seen his confusion—

Mrs. Harley. He might well be confus'd, when, after courting you these three years, he cou'd think of another; and that too at the very moment in which you were ready to oblige him.

Lady Betty. There has been a sort of fatality in the affair—and I am punish'd but too justly:—The woman that wants candour, where she is address'd by a man of merit, wants a very essential virtue; and she who can delight in the anxiety of a worthy mind, is little to be pitied when she feels the sharpest stings of anxiety in her own.

Mrs.

Mrs. Harley. But what do you intend to do with regard to this extraordinary request of Lord Winworth?—Will you really suffer him to marry Miss Marchmont?

Lady Betty. Why, what can I do? If it was improper for me, before I knew any thing of his design in regard to Miss Marchmont, to insinuate the least desire of hearing him again on the subject of his heart, 'tis doubly improper now, when I see he has turn'd his thoughts on another woman, and when this woman, besides, is one of my most valuable friends.

Mrs. Harley. Well, courage, Lady Betty:—we are'nt yet in a desperate situation.—Miss Marchmont loves you—as herself—and woudn't, I dare say, accept the first man in the world, if it gave you the least uneasiness.—I'll go to her, therefore, this very moment—tell her at once how the case is;—and, my life for it, her obligations to you—

Lady Betty. Stay, Emmy—I conjure you, stay—and, as you value my peace of mind, be for ever silent on this subject.—Miss Marchmont has no obligations to me;—since our acquaintance I have been the only person oblig'd; she has given me a power of serving the worthiest young creature in the world, and so far has laid me under the greatest obligation.

Mrs. Harley. Why, my dear——

Lady Betty. But suppose I could be mean enough to think an apartment in my house, a place in my chariot, a seat at my table, and a little annuity, in case of my decease, were obligations, when I continually enjoy such a happiness as her friendship and her company;—do you think they are obligations which shou'd make a woman of her fine sense, reject the most amiable man existing, especially in her circumstances, where he has the additional recommendation of an elevated rank and an affluent fortune;—This wou'd be exacting interest with a witness for trifles; and, instead of having any little merit to claim from my behaviour to her, I shou'd be the most inexorable of all usurers.

Mrs. Harley. Well, but suppose Miss Marchmont shou'd not like my Lord?

Lady Betty. Not like him!—why will you suppose an impossibility?

Mrs. Harley. But let us suppose it, for argument sake.

Lady Betty. Why I cannot say but it wou'd please me above all things:—For still, Emmy, I am a woman, and feel this unexpected

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misfortune

misfortune with the keenest sensibility:—it kills me to think of his being another's; but if he must, I wou'd rather see him her's than any woman's in the universe.—But I'll talk no more upon this subject, till I acquaint her with his proposal; and yet, Emmy, how severe a trial must I go through!

Mrs. Harley. Ay, and you most richly deserve it.

[*Exeunt.*]

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

A C T III

SCENE, Lady BETTY's Garden.

Sir HARRY, Miss RIVERS, and SALLY, cross at the head of the stage; Colonel RIVERS observing them.

Rivers. I N close conversation with Sir Harry this half hour, at the remotest part of the garden!—Why, what am I to think of all this?—Doesn't she know I have refus'd him?—Doesn't she know herself engag'd to Sidney?—There's something mean and pitiful in suspicion:—But still there is something that alarms me in this affair; and who knows how far the happiness of my child may be at stake?—Women, after all, are strange things;—they have more sense than we generally allow them—but they have also more vanity.—Tisn't for want of understanding they err,—but through an insatiable love of flattery.—They know very well when they are committing a fault, but destruction wears so bewitching a form, that they rebel against the sense of their own conviction—and never trouble themselves about consequences till they are actually undone.—But here they come.—I don't like this listening:—Yet the meanness of the action must for once be justified by the necessity. [Retires behind a clump of trees.]

Enter Miss RIVERS, Sir HARRY, and SALLY.

Miss Rivers. Indeed, Sir Harry, you upbraid me very unjustly.—I feel the refusal which my father has given you severely;—nevertheless, I must

I must not consent to your proposal.—An elopement wou'd, I am sure, break his heart;—and he is wholly ignorant of my partiality for you,—I cannot accuse him of unkindness.

Rivers [behind]. So! so! so! so!

Sir Harry. Why then, my dear Miss Rivers, wouldn't you give me leave to mention the prepossession with which you honour me, to the old Gentleman?

Rivers. The old Gentleman!—

Miss Rivers. Because I was in hopes my father wou'd have listen'd to your application, without putting me to the painful necessity of acknowledging my sentiments in your favour; and because I fear'd, that unless the application was approv'd, on account of its intrinsic generosity, there was nothing which cou'd possibly work upon the firmness of his temper.

Rivers. Well said, daughter!

Sally. The firmness of your father's temper, Madam!—the obstinacy you shou'd say.—Sir Harry, as I live and breathe, there isn't so obstinate, so perverse, and so peevish an old devil in all England.

Rivers. Thank you, Mrs. Sally.

Miss Rivers. Sally, I insist that when you speak of my father, you always speak of him with respect.—'Tisn't your knowledge of secrets which shall justify these freedoms;—for I wou'd rather every thing was discovered this minute, than hear him mention'd with so impudent a familiarity by his servants.

Sally. Well, Madam, I beg pardon;—but you know the Colonel, where he once determines, is never to be alter'd;—so call his steadiness by what name you please—'tis likely to make you miserable, unless you embrace the present opportunity, and go off, like a woman of spirit, with the object of your affections.

Rivers. What a damn'd jade it is!

Sir Harry. Indeed, my dear Miss Rivers, Sally advises you like a true friend;—and I am satisfy'd your own good sense must secretly argue on her side the question.—The only alternative you have, is to fly and be happy,—or stay and be miserable.—You have yourself acknowledged, my ever adorable—

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Rivers.

Rivers. O damn your adorables!

Sir Harry. I say, Madam, you have yourself acknowledg'd, that there is no hope whatsoever of working upon the Colonel's tenderness, by acquainting him with our mutual affection:—On the contrary, 'tis likely, that had he the least suspicion of my being honour'd with your regard, he wou'd drag you instantly to his favourite Sidney, who is so utterly insensible of your merit,—and who, if he has a passion for any body, is, I am confident, devoted to Miss Marchmont.

Rivers. Why what a lye has the rascal trump'd up here against poor Sidney?

Miss Rivers. Dear Sir Harry, what wou'd you have me do?

Rivers. There!—Her dear Sir Harry!

Sir Harry. My ever adorable Miss Rivers—

Rivers. No, she can't stand these ever-adorables.

Sir Harry. This excess of filial affection is extremely amiable:—but it ought by no means to render you forgetful of what is due to yourself.—Consider, Madam, if you have been treated with tenderness, you have repaid that tenderness with duty, and have so far discharg'd this mighty obligation.

Rivers. A pretty method of settling accounts truly!

Miss Rivers. Don't, my dear Sir Harry, speak in this negligent manner of my father.

Rivers. Kind creature!

Sir Harry. From what I have urged you must see, Madam, that though you are so ready to sacrifice your peace for your father, he sets a greater value upon a trifling promise than upon your happiness:—Judge, therefore, whether his repose should be dearer to you than your own; and judge too, whether to prevent the breach of his word, you shou'd vow eternal tenderness to a man you must eternally detest, and violate even your veracity to kill the object of your love?

Miss Rivers. Good Heav'n, what shall I do?

Sally. Do—Madam—go off, to be sure.

Rivers. I'll wring that huffey's head off.

Sir Harry. On my knees, Madam, let me beg you will consult your own happiness, and, in your own, the happiness of your father.

Rivers.

Rivers. Ay, now he kneels, 'tis all over.

Sir Harry. The Colonel, Madam, has great sensibility, and the consciousness that he himself has been the cause of your unhappiness, will fill him with endless regret:—Whereas, by escaping with me, the case will be utterly otherwise:—When he sees we are inseparably united, and hears with how unabating an assiduity I labour to merit the blessing of your hand, a little time will necessarily make us friends; and I have great hopes that, before the end of three months, we shall be the favourites of the whole family.

Rivers. You'll be curiously mistaken, though.—

Sir Harry. But speak, my dear Miss Rivers—speak, and pronounce my fate.

Miss Rivers. Sir Harry, you have convinc'd me;—

Rivers. Ay, I knew he would.—

Miss Rivers. And provided you here give me a solemn assurance, that the moment we are married you will employ every possible method of effecting a reconciliation—

Sir Harry. You consent to go off with me the first opportunity.—A thousand thanks, my Angel, for this generous condescension!—and when—

Miss Rivers. There is no occasion for professions, Sir Harry;—I rely implicitly on your tenderness and your honour.—

Sally. Dear Madam, you have transported your poor Sally by this noble resolution.

Rivers. I dare say she has;—but I may chance to cool your transport in a horse-pond.—

Miss Rivers. I am oblig'd to you, Sally, for the part you take in my affairs; and I purpose that you shall be the companion of my flight.

Sally. Shall I, Madam!—you are too good;—and I am sure I shoudn't like to live in my old master's house, when you are out of the family.

Rivers. Don't be uneasy on that account.

Sir Harry. Suffer me now, my dear Miss Rivers, since you have been thus generously kind, to inform you, that a coach and six will be ready punctually at twelve, at the side of a little paddock, at the back of Lady Betty's garden.—There's a close walk, you know, from the garden.

garden to the place, and I'll meet you at the spot to conduct you to the coach.

Miss Rivers. Well, I am strangely apprehensive!—but I'll be there.—However, 'tis now high time for us to separate;—my father's eyes are generally every where,—and I am impatient, since it is determined, —'till our design is executed.

Rivers. O, I don't in the least doubt it.

Sir Harry. 'Till twelve, then, farewell, my charmer.

Miss Rivers. You do what you will with me.— [*Exit separately.*]

Rivers [*coming forward*]. You do what you will with me! Why what a fool, what an idiot was I,—ever to suppose I had a daughter?—From the moment of her birth—to this cursed hour, I have labour'd, I have toil'd for her happiness; and now, when I fancy'd myself sure of her tenderest affection, she casts me off for ever.—By and by,—I shall have this fellow at my feet, entreating my forgiveness; and the world will think me an unfeeling monster, if I don't give him my estate, as a reward for having blasted my dearest expectations.—The world will think it strange that I should not promote his felicity, because he has utterly destroy'd mine; and my dutiful daughter will be surpris'd, if the tender ties of nature are not strictly regarded in my conduct, though she has violated the most sacred of them all in her own.—Death and hell! who would be a father?—There is yet one way left,—and, if that fails,—why, I never had a daughter.— [*Exit.*]

The SCENE changes to an Apartment.

Enter Miss MARCHMONT and CECIL.

Miss Marchmont. Nay, now, Sir, I must tax you with unkindness;—know something that may possibly be of consequence to my welfare,—and yet decline to tell me;—Is this consistent with the usual friendship which I have met with from Mr. Cecil?

Cecil. Look'ye, Hortensia, 'tis because I set a very great value on your esteem, that I find this unwillingness to explain myself.

Miss Marchmont. Indeed, Sir, you grow every moment more and more mysterious.

Cecil. Well then, Hortensia, if I thought you wouldn't be offended,—I

Miss

Miss Marchmont. I am sure, Sir, you will never say any thing to give me a reasonable cause of offence.—I know your kindness for me too well, Sir.

Cecil. Where is the need of Sirring me at every word?—I desire you will lay aside this ceremony, and treat me with the same freedom you do every body else;—these Sirs are so cold, and so distant—

Miss Marchmont. Indeed, Sir, I can't so easily lay aside my respect as you imagine, for I have long consider'd you as a father.

Cecil. As a father!—but that's a light in which I don't want to be consider'd.—As a father indeed!—O she's likely to think me a proper husband for her, I can see that already! *[aside.]*

Miss Marchmont. Why not, Sir?—your years,—your friendship for my father, and your partiality for me, sufficiently justify the propriety of my epithet.—

Cecil. *[aside.]* My years!—Yes, I thought my years would be an invincible obstacle.

Miss Marchmont. But pray, Sir,—to the business upon which you wanted to speak with me:—You don't consider I am all this time upon the rack of my sex's curiosity.—

Cecil. Why then, Hortensia,—I will proceed to the business—and ask you, in one word,—if you have any disinclination to be married?

Miss Marchmont. This is proceeding to business indeed, Sir:—but ha! ha! ha! pray, who have you design'd me as a husband?

Cecil. Why, what do you think of a man about my age?

Miss Marchmont. Of your age, Sir?

Cecil. Yes, of my age.—

Miss Marchmont. Why, Sir, what would you advise me to think of him?

Cecil. That isn't the question, for all your arch significance of manner, Madam.

Miss Marchmont. O I am sure you would never recommend him to me as a husband, Sir!

Cecil. —So!—and why not, pray?

Miss Marchmont. Because I am sure you have too great a regard for me.

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Cecil. She gives me rare encouragement. [aside.]—But do you imagine it impossible for such a husband to love you very tenderly?

†

Miss

Miss Marchmont. No—Sir!—But do you imagine it possible for me to love him very tenderly?—You see I have caught your own frankness, Sir,—and answer with as much ease as you question me.

Cecil [*aside.*] How lucky it was that I did not open myself directly to her!—O I shou'd have been most purely contemptible!

Miss Marchmont. But pray, Sir,—have you, in reality, any meaning by these questions?—Is there actually any body who has spoken to you on my account?

Cecil. Hortensia, there is a fellow, a very foolish fellow, for whom I have some value, that entertains the sincerest affection for you.

Miss Marchmont. Then, indeed, Sir, I am very unhappy,—for I cannot encourage the addresses of any body.

Cecil. No!

Miss Marchmont. O, Sir! I had but two friends in the world,—yourself and Lady Betty;—and I am, with justice, apprehensive, that neither will consider me long with any degree of regard.—Lady Betty has a proposal from Lord Winworth of the same nature with yours, in which I fear she will strongly interest herself;—and I must be under the painful necessity of disobliging you both, from an utter impossibility of listening to either of your recommendations.

Cecil. I tell you, Hortensia, not to alarm yourself.

Miss Marchmont. Dear Sir, I have always consider'd you with reverence, and it would make me inconceivably wretched, if you imagin'd I was actuated upon this occasion by any ridiculous singularity of sentiment.—I wou'd do much to please you,—and I scarcely know what I shou'd refuse to Lady Betty's request;—but, Sir, though it distresses me exceedingly to discover it,—I must tell you I have not a heart to dispose of.

Cecil. How's this?

Miss Marchmont. At the same time, I must, however, tell you, that my affections are so plac'd as to make it wholly impossible for me ever to change my situation.—This acknowledgment of a prepossession, Sir, may be inconsistent with the nice reserve which is proper for my sex;—but it is necessary to justify me in a case where my gratitude might be reasonably suspected; and when I recollect to whom it is made, I hope it will be doubly entitled to an excuse.

Cecil.

Cecil. Your candour, Hortensia, needs no apology;—but as you have trusted me thus far with your secret,—mayn't I know why you can have no prospect of being united to the object of your affections?

Miss Marchmont. Because, Sir, he is engaged to a most deserving young lady, and will be married to her in a few days.—In short, Mr. Sidney is the man for whom I entertain this secret partiality;—you see, therefore, that my partiality is hopeless;—but you see, at the same time, how utterly improper it would be for me to give a lifeless hand to another, while he is entirely master of my affections.—It would be a meanness, of which I think myself incapable; and I shou'd be quite unworthy the honour of any deserving hand, if, circumstanced in this manner, I cou'd basely stoop to accept it.

Cecil. You interest me strangely in your story, Hortensia!—But has Sidney any idea—

Miss Marchmont. None in the least.—Before the match with Miss Rivers was in agitation, he made addresses to me, though privately; and, I must own, his tenderness, join'd to his good qualities, soon gave me impressions in his favour.—But, Sir, I was a poor orphan, wholly dependant upon the generosity of others, and he was a younger brother of family, great in his birth, but contracted in his circumstances.—What could I do?—It was not in my power to make his fortune,—and I had too much pride, or too much affection, to think of destroying it.

Cecil. You are a good girl,—a very good girl;—but surely if Lady Betty knows any thing of this matter, there can be no danger of her recommending Lord Winworth so earnestly to your attention.—

Miss Marchmont. There, Sir, is my principal misfortune.—Lady Betty is, of all persons, the least proper to be made acquainted with it.—Her heart is in the marriage between Miss Rivers and Mr. Sidney; and had she the least idea of my sentiments for him, or of his inclination for me, I am positive it would immediately frustrate the match.—On this account, Sir, I have carefully conceal'd the secret of my wishes,—and on this account I must still continue to conceal it.—My heart shall break before it shall be worthless;—and I shou'd detest myself for ever, if I was capable of establishing my own peace at the expence of my benefactress's first wish, and the desire of her whole family.

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Cecil.

Cecil. Zounds, what can be the matter with my eyes!—

Miss Marchmont. My life was mark'd out early by calamity,—and the first light I beheld, was purchas'd with the loss of a mother.—The grave snatch'd away the best of fathers, just as I came to know the value of such a blessing;—and had it not been for the exalted goodness of others, I, who once experienced the unspeakable pleasure of relieving the necessitous, had myself, perhaps, felt the immediate want of bread.—And shall I ungratefully sting the bosom which has thus benevolently cherish'd me?—Shall I basely wound the peace of those who have rescued me from despair;—and stab at their tranquillity, in the very moment they honour me with protection?—O, Mr. Cecil! they deserve every sacrifice which I can make.—May the benignant hand of Providence shower endless happiness upon their heads; and may the sweets of a still-encreasing felicity be their portion, whatever becomes of me!

Cecil. Hortensia,—I can't stay with you.—My eyes are exceedingly painful of late:—what the devil can be the matter with them?—But let me tell you before I go, that you shall be happy after all;—that you shall, I promise you.—But I see Lady Betty coming this way—and I cannot enter into explanations:—yet, do you hear,—don't suppose I am angry with you for refusing my friend;—don't suppose such a thing, I charge you;—for he has too much pride to force himself upon any woman, and too much humanity to make any woman miserable.—He is, besides, a very foolish fellow, and it doesn't signify— [Exit.]

Enter LADY BETTY.

Lady Betty. Well, my dear Hortensia, I am come again to ask you what you think of Lord Winworth.—We were interrupted before,—and I want, as soon as possible, for the reason I hinted, to know your real opinion of him.

Miss Marchmont. You have long known my real opinion of him, Lady Betty.—You know I always thought him a very amiable man.

Lady Betty. [with impatience.] Do you think him an amiable man?

Miss Marchmont. The whole world thinks as I do in this respect,—yet—

Lady Betty. Ay, she loves him, 'tis plain; and there is no hope after this declaration—[aside.]—His Lordship merits your good opinion, I assure you, Miss Marchmont.

Miss

Miss Marchmont. [*aside.*] Yes, I see by this ceremony that she is offended at my coolness to the proposal.

Lady Betty. I have hinted to you, Miss Marchmont, that my Lord requested I wou'd exert my little interest with you in his favour.

Miss Marchmont. The little interest your Ladyship has with me;—the little interest—

Lady Betty. Don't be displeas'd with me, my dear Hortensia,—I know my interest with you is considerable.—I know you love me.

Miss Marchmont. I wou'd sacrifice my life for you Lady Betty: For what had that life been without your generosity?

Lady Betty. If you love me Hortensia, never mention any thing of this nature.

Miss Marchmont. You are too good.—

Lady Betty. But to my Lord Winworth.—He has earnestly requested I wou'd become his advocate with you.—He has entirely got the better of his former attachments, and there can be no doubt of his making you an excellent husband.

Miss Marchmont. His Lordship does me infinite honour;—nevertheless—

Lady Betty. [*eagerly.*] Nevertheless, what, my dear?

Miss Marchmont. I say, notwithstanding I think myself highly honour'd by his sentiments in my favour,—'tis utterly impossible for me to return his affection.

Lady Betty. [*surprised.*] Impossible for you to return his affection!

Miss Marchmont. [*aside.*] I knew what an interest she wou'd take in this affair.

Lady Betty. And do you really say you can't give him a favourable answer?—How fortunate! [*aside.*]

Miss Marchmont. I do, my dear Lady Betty;—I can honour, I can reverence him;—but I cannot feel that tenderness for his person, which I imagine to be necessary both for his happiness and my own.

Lady Betty. Upon my word, my dear, you are extremely difficult in your choice; and if Lord Winworth is not capable of inspiring you with tenderness,—I don't know who is likely to succeed; for, in my opinion, there is not a man in England possessed of more personal accomplishments.

Miss Marchmont. And yet, great as these accomplishments are, my dear Lady Betty, they never excited your tenderness.

Lady Betty. Why, all this is very true, my dear;—but, though I felt no tenderness,—yet I—to be sure, I—that is—I say, nevertheless—This is beyond my hopes! [*aside.*]

Miss Marchmont. [*aside.*] She's distress'd that I decline the proposal. Her friendship for us both is generously warm;—and she imagines I am equally insensible to his merit, and to my own interest.

Lady Betty. Well, my dear, I see your emotion,—and I heartily beg your pardon for saying so much.—I shou'd be inexpressibly concern'd, if I thought you made any sacrifice on this occasion to me.—My Lord, to be sure, possesses a very high place in my esteem,—but—

Miss Marchmont. Dear Lady Betty, what can I do?—I see you are offended with me,—and yet—

Lady Betty. I offended with you, my dear?—far from it; I commend your resolution extremely, since my Lord is not a man to your taste.—Offended with you! why shou'd I take the liberty to be offended with you?—A presumption of that nature—

Miss Marchmont. Indeed, Lady Betty, this affair makes me very unhappy.

Lady Betty. Indeed, my dear, you talk very strangely:—so far from being sorry that you have refus'd my Lord—I am pleas'd—infinately pleas'd,—that is, since he was not agreeable to you.—Be satisfied your acceptance of him wou'd have given me no pleasure in the world;—I assure you it wou'dn't:—on the contrary, as matters are situated, I wou'dn't for the world have you give him the smallest encouragement. [*Exit.*]

Miss Marchmont. [*alone.*] I see she's greatly disappointed at my refusal of an offer so highly to my advantage.—I see, moreover, she's griev'd that his Lordship should meet with a second repulse; and from a quarter too, where the generosity of his proposal might be reasonably expected to promise it success.—How surpris'd she seem'd, when I told her he cou'dn't make an impression on my heart! and how eagerly she endeavour'd to convince me that she was pleas'd with my conduct; not considering that this very eagerness was a manifest proof of her dissatisfaction!—She is more interested in this affair than I even thought she

would be,—and I should be completely miserable if she cou'd suspect me of ingratitude.—As she was so zealous for the match, I was certainly to blame in declining it.—'Tis not yet, however, too late.—She has been a thousand parents to me,—and I will not regard my own wishes, when they are any way opposite to her inclinations.—Poor Mr. Cecil! —Make me happy after all!—How?—Impossible!—for I was born to nothing but misfortune.— [Exit.]

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

ACT IV.

SCENE, an Apartment at Lady BETTY's House.

Enter Lady BETTY and Mrs. HARLEY.

Lady Betty. **T**HUS far, my dear Emmy, there is a gleam of hope.—She determin'd, positively determin'd, against my Lord;—and even suspected so little of my partiality for him, that she appear'd under the greatest anxiety, lest I shou'd be offended with her for refusing him.—And yet, shall I own my folly to you? !

Mrs. Harley. Pray do, my dear;—you'll scarcely believe it,—but I have follies of my own sometimes.

Lady Betty. Why you quite surprize me!

Mrs. Harley. 'Tis very true for all that.—But to your business.

Lady Betty. Why then, greatly as I dreaded her approbation of the proposal,—I was secretly hurt at her insensibility to the personal attractions of his Lordship.

Mrs. Harley. I don't doubt it, my dear.—We think all the world should love what we are in love with ourselves.

Lady Betty. You are right,—And though I was happy to find her resolution so agreeable to my wishes, my pride was not a little piqued to find it possible for her to refuse a man upon whom I had so ardently plac'd

plac'd my own affection.—The surprise which I felt on this account, threw a warmth into my expressions, and made the generous girl apprehensive that I was offended with her.

Mrs. Harley. Well, this is a strange world we live in.—That a woman without a shilling shou'd refuse an Earl with a fine person and a great estate, is the most surprising affair I ever heard of.—Perhaps, Lady Betty, my Lord may take it in his head to go round the family:—If he shou'd, my turn is next, and I assure you he shall meet with a very different reception.

Lady Betty. Then you wou'dn't be cruel, Emmy?

Mrs. Harley. Why no;—not very cruel.—I might give myself a few airs at first:—I might blush a little, and look down:—wonder what he cou'd find in me to attract his attention;—then pulling up my head, with a toss of disdain,—desire him, if ever he spoke to me on that subject again,—

Lady Betty. Well!

Mrs. Harley. To have a licence in his pocket;—that's all.—I wou'd make sure work of it at once, and leave it to your elevated minds to deal in delicate absurdities.—But I have a little anecdote for you, which proves, beyond a doubt, that you are as much as ever in possession of Lord Winworth's affection.

Lady Betty. What is it, my dear Emmy?

Mrs. Harley. Why, about an hour ago, my woman, it seems, and Arnold, my Lord's man, had a little conversation on this unexpected proposal to Miss Marchmont; in which Arnold said,—“Never tell me
“of your Miss Marchmonts, Mrs. Nelson;—between ourselves—but
“let it go no farther—Lady Betty is still the woman; and a sweet creature she is, that's the truth on't, but a little fantastical and does not
“know her own mind—”

Lady Betty. I'll assure you!—Why Mr. Arnold is a wit.

Mrs. Harley. Well, but hear him out:—“Mrs. Nelson, I know as
“much of my Lord's mind as any body: let him marry whom he
“pleases, he'll never be rightly happy but with her Ladyship; and I'd
“give a hundred guineas, with all my soul, that it cou'd be a match.”—
These Nelson tells me were his very words.—Arnold is an intelligent fellow, and much in the confidence of his master.

Lady

Lady Betty. Indeed, I always thought my Lord happy in so excellent a servant.—This intelligence is worth a world, my dear Emmy.—

Enter Miss MARCHMONT.

Miss Marchmont. I have been looking for your Ladyship.

Lady Betty. Have you any thing particular, my dear Hortensia!—But why that gloom upon your features?—What gives you uneasiness, my sweet girl? Speak, and make me happy by saying it is in my power to oblige you.

Miss Marchmont. 'Tis in your power, my dear Lady Betty, to oblige me highly,—by forgiving the ungrateful disregard which I just now shew'd to your recommendation of Lord Winworth;—

Mrs. Harley. [*aside.*] Now will I be hang'd if she doesn't undo every thing by a fresh stroke of delicacy.

Lady Betty. My dear!

Miss Marchmont. And by informing his Lordship that I am ready to pay a proper obedience to your commands.

Mrs. Harley. [*aside.*] O the devil take this elevation of sentiment!

Lady Betty. A proper obedience to my commands, my dear! I really don't understand you.

Miss Marchmont. I see how generously you are concern'd, for fear I shou'd, upon this occasion, offer violence to my inclination:—But, Lady Betty, I shou'd be infinitely more distress'd by the smallest act of ingratitude to you, than by any other misfortune.—I am therefore ready, in obedience to your wishes, to accept of his Lordship; and if I can't make him a fond wife, I will, at least, make him a dutiful one.

Mrs. Harley. [*aside.*] Now her delicacy is willing to be miserable.

Lady Betty. How cou'd you ever imagine, my dear Hortensia, that your rejection of Lord Winworth cou'd possibly give me the smallest offence?—I have a great regard for his Lordship, 'tis true, but I have a great regard for you also; and wou'd by no means wish to see his happiness promoted at your expence:—think of him, therefore, no more, and be assur'd you oblige me in an infinitely higher degree by refusing, than accepting him.

Miss Marchmont. The more I see your Ladyship's tenderness and delicacy, the more I see it necessary to give an affirmative to Lord Win-

worth's proposal—Your generosity must not get the better of my gratitude.

Mrs. Harley. Did ever two fools plague one another so heartily with their delicacy and sentiment?—[*aside.*] Dear Lady Betty, why don't you deal candidly with her?—

Lady Betty. Her happiness makes it necessary now, and I will.

Mrs. Harley. Ay, there's some sense in this.—

Lady Betty. Your uncommon generosity, my dear Hortensia, has led you into an error.—

Miss Marchmont. Not in the least, Lady Betty.

Lady Betty. Still, Hortensia, you are running into very great mistakes.—My esteem for Lord Winworth, let me now tell you,——

Enter Lord WINWORTH.

Lord Winworth. Ladies, your most obedient.—As I enter'd, Lady Betty, I heard you pronounce my name:—May I presume to ask, if you were talking to Miss Marchmont on the business I took the liberty of communicating to you this morning?

Mrs. Harley. [*aside.*] Ay, now 'tis all over, I see.

Lady Betty. Why, to be candid, my Lord, I have mention'd your proposal.—

Lord Winworth. Well, my dear Miss Marchmont, and may I flatter myself that Lady Betty's interposition will induce you to be propitious to my hopes?—The heart now offer'd to you, Madam, is a grateful one, and will retain an eternal sense of your goodness.—Speak, therefore, my dear Miss Marchmont, and kindly say you condescend to accept it.

Mrs. Harley. [*aside.*] So—here will be a comfortable piece of work.—I'll e'en retire, and leave them to the consequences of their ridiculous delicacy. [Exit.]

Miss Marchmont. I know not what to say, my Lord;—you have honour'd me, greatly honour'd me,—but Lady Betty will acquaint you with my determination.—

Lady Betty. I acquaint him, my dear—surely you are yourself the most proper to—I shall run distracted!—[*aside.*]

Miss

Miss Marchmont. Indeed, Madam, I can't speak to his Lordship on this subject.

Lady Betty. And I assure you, Hortensia, 'tis a subject upon which I do not chuse to enter.

Lord Winworth. If you had a kind answer from Miss Marchmont, Lady Betty, I am sure you wou'd enter upon it readily:—But I see her reply very clearly in your reluctance to acquaint me with it.—

Miss Marchmont. Why, Madam, will you force me to—

Lady Betty. And why, Hortensia—What am I going to say?—[*aside.*]

Lord Winworth. Don't, my dear Ladies, suffer me to distress you any longer:—To your friendship, Madam, I am as much indebted [*addressing himself to Lady Betty*] as if I had been successful;—and I sincerely wish Miss Marchmont that happiness with a more deserving man, which I find it impossible for her to confer on me. [*going.*]

Lady Betty. [*aside.*] Now I have some hope.—

Miss Marchmont. My Lord, I intreat your stay.—

Lady Betty. Don't call his Lordship back, my dear; it will have an odd appearance.

Enter Lord WINWORTH.

Miss Marchmont. He is come back;—and I must tell him what your unwillingness to influence my inclinations, makes you decline.

Lord Winworth. Your commands, Madam?—

Lady Betty. [*aside.*] Now I am undone again!

Miss Marchmont. I am in such a situation, my Lord, that I can scarcely proceed.—Lady Betty is cruelly kind to me;—but as I know her wishes—

Lady Betty. My wishes, Miss Marchmont!—Indeed, my dear, there is such a mistake—

Miss Marchmont. There is no mistaking your Ladyship's goodness; you are fearful to direct my resolution, and I shou'd be unkind to distress your friendship any longer.

Lady Betty. You do distress me indeed, Miss Marchmont.

[*half aside and sighing.*]

Lord Winworth. I am all expectation, Madam!—

Miss Marchmont. I am compell'd by gratitude to both, and from affection to my dear Lady Betty, to break through the common forms,

impos'd on our sex, and to declare that I have no will but her Ladyship's.

Lady Betty. This is so provoking! [*aside.*]

Lord Winworth. Ten thousand thanks for this condescending goodness, Madam!—a goodness which is additionally dear to me, as the result of your determination is pronounced by your own lips.

Miss Marchmont. Well, Lady Betty, I hope I have answer'd your wishes now.

Lady Betty. You cannot conceive how sensibly I am touch'd with your behaviour, my dear. [*sighs.*]

Miss Marchmont. You feel too much for me, Lady Betty.—

Lady Betty. Why I do feel something, my dear:—this unexpected event has fill'd my heart—and I am a little agitated.—But come, my dear, let us now go to the company.

Miss Marchmont. How generously, Madam, do you interest yourself for my welfare!

Lord Winworth. And for the welfare of all her friends!

Lady Betty. Your Lordship is too good.—

Lord Winworth. But the business of her life is to promote the happiness of others, and she is constantly rewarded in the exercise of her own benignity.

Lady Betty. You can't imagine how I am rewarded upon the present occasion, I assure your Lordship. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE, *the Paddock behind Lady BETTY's Garden.*

Enter Miss RIVERS and SALLY.

Sally. Dear Madam, don't terrify yourself with such gloomy reflexions.

Miss Rivers. O Sally, you can't conceive my distress in this critical situation!—An elopement, even from a tyrannical father, has something in it which must shock a delicate mind.—But when a woman flies from the protection of a parent, who merits the utmost return of her affection, she must be insensible indeed, if she does not feel the sincerest regret.—If he shou'dn't forgive me!

Sally. Dear Madam, he must forgive you—aren't you his child?

Miss Rivers. And therefore I shou'dn't disoblige him.—I am half-distracted,—and I almost repent the promise I gave Sir Harry,—when

I consider how much my character may be lessen'd by this step, and recollect how it is likely to affect my unfortunate father.—

Sally. But I wonder where Sir Harry can be all this time!—

Miss Rivers. I wish he was come.—

Sally. Courage, Madam—I hear him coming.

Miss Rivers. It must be he; let's run and meet him.—

Enter RIVERS. [*Sally shrieks and runs off.*]

Miss Rivers. My father!

Rivers. Yes, Theodora,—your poor, abandon'd, miserable father.

Miss Rivers. Oh Sir!

Rivers. Little, Theodora, did I imagine I shou'd ever have cause to lament the hour of your birth; and less did I imagine, when you arrived at an age to be perfectly acquainted with your duty, you wou'd throw every sentiment of duty off.—In what, my dear, has your unhappy father been culpable, that you cannot bear his society any longer?—What has he done to forfeit either your esteem or your affection?—From the moment of your birth to this unfortunate hour, he has labour'd to promote your happiness.—But how has his solicitude on that account been rewarded? You now fly from these arms, which have cherish'd you with so much tenderness; when gratitude, generosity, and nature should have twin'd me round your heart.—

Miss Rivers. Dear Sir!

Rivers. Look back, infatuated child, upon my whole conduct since your approach to maturity: Hav'n't I contracted my own enjoyments on purpose to enlarge yours, and watched your very looks to anticipate your inclinations? Have I ever, with the obstinacy of other fathers, been partial in favour of any man to whom you made the slightest objection?—Or have I ever shewn the least design of forcing your wishes to my own humour or caprice? On the contrary, hasn't the engagement I have enter'd into been carried on seemingly with your own approbation?—And hav'n't you always appear'd reconcil'd, at least, to a marriage with Mr. Sidney.

Miss Rivers. I am so asham'd of myself!

Rivers. How then, Theodora, have I merited a treatment of this nature? you have understanding, my dear, though you want filial affection;

fection; and my arguments must have weight with your reason, however my tranquillity may be the object of your contempt.—I lov'd you, Theodora, with the warmest degree of paternal tenderness, and flatter'd myself the proofs I every day gave of that tenderness, had made my peace of mind a matter of some importance to my child.—But alas! a paltry compliment from a coxcomb undoes the whole labour of my life; and the daughter, whom I looked upon as the support of my declining years, betrays me in the unsuspecting hour of security, and rewards with her person the assassin who stabs me to the heart.—

Miss Rivers. Hear me, dear Sir, hear me!—

Rivers. I do not come here, Theodora, to stop your flight, or put the smallest impediment in the way of your wishes.—Your person is your own, and I scorn to detain even my daughter by force, where she is not bound to me by inclination.—Since, therefore, neither duty nor discretion, a regard for my peace, nor a solicitude for your own welfare, are able to detain you,—go to this man, who has taught you to obliterate the sentiments of nature, and gain'd a ready way to your heart, by expressing a contempt for your father.—Go to him boldly, my child, and laugh at the pangs which tear this unhappy bosom.—Be uniformly culpable, nor add the baseness of a despicable flight to the unpardonable want of a filial affection. *[Going.]*

Miss Rivers. I am the most miserable creature in the world!—

Rivers. *[returns,]* One thing more, Theodora,—and then farewell for ever.—Though you come here to throw off the affection of a child, I will not quit this place before I discharge the duty of a parent, even to a romantic extravagance; and provide for your welfare, while you plunge me into the most poignant of all distresses.—In the doating hours of paternal blandishment, I have often promis'd you a fortune of twenty thousand pounds, whenever you chang'd your situation.—This promise was indeed made when I thought you incapable either of ingratitude or dissimulation,—and when I fancied your person wou'd be given, where there was some reasonable prospect of your happiness.—But still it was a promise, and shall be faithfully discharg'd.—Here then, in this pocket-book, is a security for that sum. *[Miss Rivers shews an unwillingness to receive the pocket-book.]*—Take it—but never see me more.—Banish my name eternally from your remembrance:—and when

when a little time shall remove me from a world which your conduct has render'd insupportable, boast an additional title, my dear, to your husband's regard, by having shorten'd the life of your miserable father.

[Exit.

Enter SALLY.

Sally. What, Madam, is he gone?

Miss Rivers. How cou'd I be such a monster,—such an unnatural monster, as ever to think of leaving him!—But come, Sally, let us go into the house.—

Sally. Go into the house, Madam!—Why aren't we to go off with Sir Harry?—

Miss Rivers. This insensible creature has been my confidante too!—O I shall eternally detest myself!—

Enter Sir HARRY and CECIL.

Sir Harry. I beg a thousand pardons, my dear Miss Rivers, for detaining you.—An unforeseen accident prevented me from being punctual;—but the carriage is now ready, and a few hours will whirl us to the summit of felicity.—My cousin Cecil is kindly here to assist us,—and—

Miss Rivers. Sir Harry, I can never forsake my father.—

Sir Harry. Madam!

Miss Rivers. By some accident he discover'd our design, and came to this spot while I was trembling with expectation of your appearance.—

Sir Harry. Well, my dear creature!—

Miss Rivers. Here, in a melancholy but resolute voice, he expatiated on the infamy of my intended flight, and mention'd my want of affection for him in terms that pierced my very soul.—Having done this, he took an abrupt leave, and, scorning to detain me by force, forsook me to the course of my own inclinations.

Sir Harry. Well, my angel, and since he has left you to follow your own inclinations, you will not, surely, hesitate to—

Miss Rivers. Sir Harry, unloose my hand;—the universe won'dn't bribe me now to go off with you.—O, Sir Harry! if you regarded
your

your own peace, you wou'd cease this importunity;—for is it possible that a woman can make a valuable wife, who has prov'd an unnatural daughter!

Sir Harry. But consider your own happiness, my dear Miss Rivers!—

Miss Rivers. My own happiness, Sir Harry!—What a wretch must the woman be who can dream of happiness, while she wounds the bosom of a father!

Cecil. What a noble girl!—I shall love her myself for her sense and her goodness.

Sally. [*aside to Sir Harry.*] She won't consent, I know, Sir Harry;—so, if the coach is at hand, it will be the best way to carry her off directly.

Sir Harry. Then, my dear Miss Rivers, there is no hope—

Miss Rivers. Sir Harry, I must not hear you.—This parting is a kind of death.—

Sir Harry. Part, Madam!—By all that's gracious, we must not part!—My whole soul is unalterably fix'd upon you;—and since—neither tenderness for yourself, nor affection for me, persuade you to the only measure which can promote our mutual felicity, you must forgive the despair that forces you from hence, and commits a momentary disrespect to avoid a lasting unhappiness.

Miss Rivers. Hear me, Sir Harry;—I conjure you hear me!

Sir Harry. Let me but remove you from this place, Madam, and I'll hear every thing.—Cecil, assist me.

Miss Rivers. O, Mr. Cecil, I rely upon your honour to save and protect me!

Cecil. And it shall, Madam.—For shame, kinsman, unhand the Lady!

Sir Harry. Unhand her, what do you mean, Cecil?

Cecil. What do I mean, I mean to protect the Lady.—What shou'd a man of honour mean?

Miss Rivers. [*breaking from Sir Harry.*] Dear Mr. Cecil, don't let him follow me. [*She runs off.*]

Sally. [*following.*] I'll give her warning this moment, that's the short and the long of it.

Sir Harry. Mr. Cecil, this is no time for trifling—Didn't you come here to assist me in carrying the Lady off?

Cecil.

Cecil. With her own inclinations, kinsman;—but as they are now on the other side of the question, so am I too.—You must not follow her, Sir Harry.—

Sir Harry. Zounds! but I will.

Cecil. Zounds! but you shan't.—Look'ye, Harry, I came here to assist the purposes of a man of honour, not to abet the violence of a ruffian.—Your friends of the world, your fashionable friends, may, if they please, support one another's vices; but I am a friend only to the virtues of a man; and where I sincerely esteem him, I always endeavour to make him honest in spite of his teeth.

Sir Harry. An injury like this—

Cecil. Harry!—Harry!—don't advance:—I am not to be terrified, you know, from the support of what is just;—and though you may think it very brave to fight in the defence of a bad action, it will do but little credit either to your understanding or your humanity.

Sir Harry. Dear Cecil, there's no answering that.—Your justice and your generosity over power me.—You have restor'd me to myself.—It was mean, it was unmanly, it was infamous to think of using force.—But I was distracted;—nay, I am distracted now, and must entirely rely upon your assistance to recover her.

Cecil. As far as I can act with honesty, Harry, you may depend upon me;—but let me have no more violence, I beg of you.

Sir Harry. Don't mention it, Cecil;—I am heartily asham'd—

Cecil. And I am heartily glad of it.—

Sir Harry. Pray let us go to my house and consult a little.—What a contemptible figure do I make!—

Cecil. Why, pretty well I think; but to be less so, put up your sword, Harry.—

Sir Harry. She never can forgive me.

Cecil. If she does, she will scarcely deserve to be forgiven herself.

Sir Harry. Don't, Cecil; 'tis ungenerous to be so hard upon me.—I own my fault, and you shou'd encourage me, for every coxcomb has not so much modesty.

Cecil. Why, so I will, Harry; for modesty, I see, as yet, sits upon you but very awkwardly. [Exeunt.]

A C T V.

SCENE, an Apartment at Lady BETTY'S.

Enter RIVERS and SIDNEY.

Sidney. I AM deeply sensible of Miss Rivers's very great merit,
Sir;—but—

Rivers. But what, Sir?—

Sidney. Hear me with temper, I beseech you, Colonel.

Rivers. Hear you with temper!—I don't know whether I shall be able to hear you with temper;—but go on, Sir.—

Sidney. Miss Rivers, independent of her very affluent fortune, Colonel, has beauty and merit which would make her alliance a very great honour to the first family in the kingdom.—But notwithstanding my admiration of her beauty, and my reverence for her merit, I find it utterly impossible to profit either by her goodness or your generosity.

Rivers. How is all this, Sir! Do you decline a marriage with my daughter?

Sidney. A marriage with Miss Rivers, Sir, was once the object of my highest ambition; and, had I been honour'd with her hand, I shou'd have studied to shew my sensibility of a blessing so invaluable;—but at that time, I did not suppose my happiness to be incompatible with her's.—I am now convinced that it is so, and it becomes me much better to give up my own hopes, than to offer the smallest violence to her inclinations.

Rivers. Death and hell, Sir!—what do you mean by this behaviour?—Shall I prefer your alliance to any man's in England?—shall my daughter even express a readiness to marry you?—and shall you, after this, insolently tell me you don't choose to accept her?—

Sidney. Dear Colonel, you totally misconceive my motive;—and I am sure, upon reflexion, you will rather approve than condemn it.—A man of common humanity, Sir, in a treaty of marriage, shou'd consult the lady's wishes as well as his own; and if he can't make her happy, he will scorn to make her miserable.

Rivers.

Rivers. Scorn to make her miserable!—Why the fellow's mad, I believe.—Doesn't the girl absolutely consent to have you?—Would you have her drag you to the altar by force?—Would you have her fall at your feet, and beg of you, with tears, to pity one of the finest women, with one of the best fortunes, in England?

Sidney. Your vehemence, Sir, prevents you from considering this matter in a proper light.—Miss Rivers is sufficiently unhappy in losing the man of her heart; but her distress must be greatly aggravated, if, in the moment she is most keenly sensible of this loss, she is compell'd to marry another.—Besides, Colonel, I must have my feelings too.—There is something shocking in an union with a woman whose affections we know to be alienated; and 'tis difficult to say which is most entitled to contempt, he that stoops to accept of a pre-engaged mind, or he that puts up with a prostituted person.

Rivers. Mighty well, Sir!—mighty well! But let me tell you, Mr. Sidney,—that under this specious appearance of generosity, I can easily see your motive for this refusal of my daughter;—let me tell you, I can easily see your motive, Sir;—and let me tell you, that the person who is in possession of your affections, shall no longer find an asylum in this house.

Sidney. Colonel, if I had not been always accustomed to respect you,—and if I did not even consider this insult as a kind of compliment, I don't know how I shou'd put up with it. As to your insinuation, you must be more explicit before I can understand you.

Rivers. Miss Marchmont,—Sir.—Do you understand me now, Sir? If Miss Marchmont had not been in the case, my daughter had not received this insult.—Sir Harry was right; and had not I been ridiculously befotted with your hypocritical plausibility, I might have seen it sooner; but your cousin shall know of your behaviour, and then, Sir, you shall answer me as a man.

Sidney. Miss Marchmont, Colonel; is greatly above this illiberal reflexion; as for myself, I shall be always ready to justify an action which I know to be right, though I shou'd be sorry ever to meet you but in the character of a friend. [Exit.

Rivers. [alone.] Well!—well!—well!—but it doesn't signify,—it doesn't signify,—it doesn't signify,—I won't put myself in a passion about

about it;—I won't put myself in a passion about it.—I'll tear the fellow piece-meal.—Zounds! I don't know what I'll do. [Exit.

Enter Mrs. HARLEY and CECIL.

Cecil. Why this is better and better.

Mrs. Harley. What a violent passion he's in!

Cecil. This is the very thing I could wish—'twill advance a principal part of our project rarely.—Well isn't Sidney a noble young fellow; and doesn't he richly deserve the regard which my poor little girl entertains for him?

Mrs. Harley. Why really I think he does.—But how secretly my Lady Sentimental carried matters!—O, I always said that your grave, reflecting, moralizing damsels, were a thousand times more susceptible of tender impressions than those lively, open-hearted girls who talk away at random, and seem ready to run off with every man that happens to fall into their company.

Cecil. I don't know, widow, but there may be some truth in this: you see, at least, I have such a good opinion of a madcap, that you are the first person I have made acquainted with the secret.

Mrs. Harley. Well, and hav'n't I return'd the compliment, by letting you into my design about Lady Betty and Lord Winworth?

Cecil. What a ridiculous baffle is there here about delicacy and stuff!—Your people of refin'd sentiments are the most troublesome creatures in the world to deal with, and their friends must even commit a violence upon their nicety, before they can condescend to study their own happiness.—But have you done as we concerted?

Mrs. Harley. Yes; I have pretended to Lady Betty that my Lord desires to speak with her privately on business of the utmost importance; and I have told his Lordship that she wants to see him, to disclose a secret that must entirely break off the intended marriage with Miss Marchmont.

Cecil. What an awkward figure they must make! each imagining that the other has desired the interview.—and expecting every moment to be told something of consequence.—But you have not given either the least hint of Hortensia's secret inclination for Sidney?

Mrs. Harley. How could you possibly suppose such a thing?

Cecil.

Cecil. Well, well, to your part of the business then, while I found out the Colonel, and try what I can do with him for my rattle-pated Sir Harry.

Mrs. Harley. O never doubt my assiduity in an affair of this nature!

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter Lady BETTY, in another Apartment.

Lady Betty. What can he want with me, I wonder?—Speak with me again in private, and upon business of the utmost importance! He has spoken sufficiently to me already upon his business of importance to make me miserable for ever.—But the fault is my own, and I have nobody to blame but myself.—Bless me! here he is.

Enter WINWORTH.

Winworth. Madam! your most devoted: I come in obedience to your commands to——

Lady Betty. My commands, my Lord?

Winworth. Yes, Madam, your message has alarm'd me prodigiously;—and you cannot wonder if I am a little impatient for an explanation.

Lady Betty. Impatient for an explanation, my Lord!

Winworth. Yes, Madam, the affair is of the nearest concern to my happiness, and the sooner you honour me with——

Lady Betty. Honour you with what my Lord?

Winworth. My dear Lady Betty, this reserve is unkind, especially as you know how uneasy I must be 'till I hear from yourself——

Lady Betty. Really, my Lord, I am quite astonish'd!—Uneasy till you hear from myself!—Impatient for an explanation!—I beg your Lordship will tell me what is the meaning of all this?

Winworth. Surely, Madam, you cannot so suddenly change your kind intentions.——

Lady Betty. My kind intentions, my Lord!

Winworth. I would not, Madam, be too presuming, but, as I know your Ladyship's goodness, I flatter myself that——

Lady Betty. Your Lordship is all a mystery!—I beg you will speak out; for upon my word I don't understand these half sentences.——

Winworth. Why, Madam, Mrs. Harley has told me——

Lady Betty. [with eagerness.] What has she told you, my Lord?

Winworth. She has told me of the secret, Madam, which you have to disclose, that must entirely break off my marriage with Miss Marchmont.

Lady Betty. Has she then betray'd my weakness?—

Winworth. Madam, I hope you won't think your generous intentions in my favour a weakness; for be assured that the study of my whole life—

Lady Betty. I did not think that Mrs. Harley could be capable of such an action;—but since she has told you of the only circumstance which I ever wish'd to be conceal'd, I cannot deny my partiality for your Lordship.

Winworth. Madam!—

Lady Betty. This secret was trusted with her, and her alone; but though she has ungenerously discover'd it, her end will still be disappointed. I acknowledge that I prize your Lordship above all the world;—but even to obtain you, I will not be guilty of a baseness, nor promote my own happiness by any act of injustice to Miss Marchmont.

Winworth. I am the most unfortunate man in the world!—And does your Ladyship really honour me with any degree of a tender partiality?

Lady Betty. This question is needless, my Lord, after what Mrs. Harley has acquainted you with.

Winworth. Mrs. Harley, Madam, has not acquainted me with particulars of any nature—

Lady Betty. No!

Winworth. No.—And happy as this discovery wou'd have made me at any other time, it now distresses me beyond expression, since the engagements I have just enter'd into with Miss Marchmont, put it wholly out of my power to receive any benefit from the knowledge of your sentiments.—O Lady Betty! had you been generously candid when I solicited the blessing of your hand, how much had I been indebted to your goodness! But now, think what my situation is, when, in the moment I am sensible of your regard, I must give you up for ever.

Enter

Enter CECIL and Mrs. HARLEY from opposite Places.

Mrs. Harley. [repeating ludicrously] "Who can behold such beauty, and be silent!"

Cecil. [in the same accent.] "Desire first taught us words.—"

Mrs. Harley. "Man, when created, wander'd up and down,

Cecil. "Forlorn and silent as his vassal beasts;

Mrs. Harley. "But when a heav'n-born maid like you appear'd,

Cecil. "Strange pleasure fill'd his eyes, and seiz'd his heart,

Mrs. Harley. "Unloos'd his tongue,

Cecil. "And his first talk was love." [Both.] ha! ha! ha!

Winworth. Pray, Mr. Cecil, what is the meaning of this whimsical behaviour?

Lady Betty. The nature of this conduct, Mrs. Harley, bears too strong a resemblance to a late dissimulation, for me to wonder at.

Mrs. Harley. What dissimulation, my dear?

Lady Betty. Why, pray, Madam, what secret had I to disclose to his Lordship?

Mrs. Harley. The secret which you have disclos'd, my dear,— [curtseying.

Cecil. I beg, my Lord, that we mayn't interrupt your heroics, "when, in the moment you are sensible of her regard,—you must give her up for ever."—A very moving speech, Mrs. Harley!—I am sure it almost makes me cry to repeat it.

Winworth. Mr. Cecil, listening is—

Mrs. Harley. What are we going to have a quarrel?—

Cecil. O, yes; your lover is a mere nobody without a little bloodshed: two or three duels give a wonderful addition to his character.

Lady Betty. Why, what is the meaning of all this?

Cecil. You shall know in a moment, Madam;—so walk in, good people,—walk in, and see the most surprising pair of true lovers, who have too much sense to be wise, and too much delicacy to be happy.

Mrs. Harley. Walk in,—walk in.

Enter

Enter RIVERS, Miss RIVERS, Miss MARCHMONT, Sir HARRY and SIDNEY.

Lady Betty. O, Emmy! is this behaving like a friend?

Mrs. Harley. Yes, and like a true friend, as you shall see presently.—

Rivers. My Lord, I give you joy, joy heartily.—We have been posted for some time, under the direction of Marshal Cecil and General Harley, in the next room, who have acquainted us with every thing; and I feel the sincerest satisfaction to think the perplexities of to-day have so fortunate a conclusion.

Winworth. The perplexities of to-day are not yet concluded, Colonel.

Miss Marchmont. O Lady Betty, why wouldn't you trust me with your secret? I have been the innocent cause of great uneasiness to you, and yet my conduct entirely proceeded from the greatness of my affection.

Lady Betty. I know it, my dear,—I know it well;—but were you to give up Lord Winworth this moment,—be assured that I wouldn't accept of any sacrifice made at the expence of your happiness.

Cecil. At the expence of her happiness!—O, is that all?—Come here, master Soberfides [*to Sidney*] and come here, Madam Gravity [*to Miss Marchmont*] come here, I say!—I suppose, my Lord, I suppose Lady Betty, that you already know from what very manly motives—Sidney, here, has declin'd the marriage with Miss Rivers?

Winworth. I do; and though I lament the impossibility of a relation to the Colonel's family, I cannot but admire his behaviour on that occasion.

Lady Betty. And I think it extremely generous.

Mrs. Harley. Come, Cecil, stand by a little; you shan't have the whole management of this discovery.

Cecil. Did you ever see such a woman!

Mrs. Harley. Well, my Lord and Lady Betty, since we have agreed thus far, you must know that Mr. Sidney's behaviour has produced more good consequences than you can imagine.—In the first place, it has enabled Colonel Rivers, without a breach of his word,—

Cecil. To give his daughter to my foolish kinsman.

Mrs. Harley. You won't hold your tongue.

Cecil.

Cecil. And, in the next place, it has enabled Mr. Sidney—

Mrs. Harley. To marry Miss Marchmont.

Cecil. Ay, she will have the last word.—For it seems that between these two turtles there has long subsisted—

Mrs. Harley. A very tender affection,—

Cecil. The devil's in her tongue!—she has the speed of me.

Winworth. What an unexpected felicity?

Lady Betty. I am all amazement!

Rivers. Well, well, my dear sister,—no wondering about it;—at a more convenient time you shall know particulars; for the present let me tell you, that now I am cool, and that matters have been properly explain'd to me, I am not only satisfied but charm'd with Mr. Sidney's behaviour, though it has prevented the first wish of my heart; and I hope that his Lordship and you, by consenting to his marriage with Miss Marchmont, will immediately remove every impediment in the way of your own happiness.

Winworth. If my own happiness was not to be promoted by such a step, I shou'd instantly give my consent;—and therefore, my dear Miss Marchmont, if I have Lady Betty's approbation and your own concurrence, I here bestow this hand upon as deserving a young man as any in the universe.—This is the only atonement I can make for the uneasiness I have given you; and if your happiness is any way proportion'd to your merit, I need not wish you a greater share of felicity.

Sidney. What shall I say, my Lord?

Winworth. Say nothing, Charles; for if you only knew how exquisite a satisfaction I receive on this occasion, you wou'd rather envy my feelings than think yourself under an obligation.—And now, my dear Lady Betty, if I might presume—

Lady Betty. That I may not be censured any longer, I here declare my hand your Lordship's, whenever you think proper to demand it; for I am now convinced the greatest proof which a woman can give of her own worth, is to entertain an affection for a man of honour and understanding.

Winworth. This goodness, Madam, is too great for acknowledgment.

Lady Betty. And now, my dear Theodora, let me congratulate with you: I rejoice that your inclinations are consulted in the most important
† circumstance

circumstance of your life; and I am sure Sir Harry will not be wanting in gratitude for the partiality which you have shewn in his favour.

Miss Rivers. Dear Madam, you oblige me infinitely.

Sir Harry. And as for me, Lady Betty, it is so much my inclination to deserve the partiality with which Miss Rivers has honour'd me, as well as to repay the goodness of her family, that I shall have little merit in my gratitude to either. I have been wild, I have been inconsiderate, but I hope I never was despicable; and I flatter myself I shan't be wanting in acknowledgment only to those, who have laid me under the greatest of all obligations.

Rivers. Sir Harry, say no more.—My girl's repentance has been so noble; your Cousin Cecil's behaviour has been so generous; and I believe you, after all, to be a man of such principle,—that next to Sidney, I don't know who I shou'd prefer to you for a son-in-law.—But you must think a little for the future, and remember, that it is a poor excuse for playing the fool, to be possess'd of a good understanding.

Winworth. Well, there seems but one thing remaining undone:—I just now took the liberty of exercising a father's right over Miss Marchmont, by disposing of her hand; 'tis now necessary for me—

Cecil. Hold, my Lord;—I guess what you are about, but you shan't monopolize generosity, I assure you.—I have a right to shew my friendship, as well as your Lordship; so, after your kinsman's marriage, whatever you have a-mind to do for him shall be equall'd, on my part, for Miss Marchmont; guinea for guinea, as far as you will, and let's see who tires first in going through with it.

Winworth. A noble challenge, and I accept it.

Lady Betty. No, there's no bearing this.—

Miss Marchmont. Speak to them, Mr. Sidney, for I cannot.—

Sidney. I wish I had words to declare my sense of this goodness.

Rivers. I didn't look upon myself as a very pitiful fellow, but I am strangely sunk in my own opinion, since I have been a witness of this transaction.

Cecil. Why, what the devil is there in all this to wonder at? People of fortune often throw away thousands at the hazard table to make themselves miserable, and nobody ever accuses them of generosity.

Winworth. Mr. Cecil is perfectly right; and he is the best manager of a fortune, who is most attentive to the wants of the deserving.

Mrs.

Mrs. Harley. Why now all is as it shou'd be,—all is as it shou'd be!—This is the triumph of good sense over delicacy.—I cou'd cry for downright joy.—I wonder what ails me!—this is all my doing!

Cecil. No,—part of it is mine;—and I think it extremely happy for your people of refin'd sentiments to have friends with a little common understanding.

Rivers. Sister, I always thought you a woman of sense.—

Mrs. Harley. Yes, she has been a long time intimate with me, you know.

Cecil. Well said sauce-box!

Sir Harry. If this story was to be represented on the stage, the poet wou'd think it his duty to punish me for life, because I was once culpable.

Winworth. That wou'd be very wrong. The stage shou'd be a school of morality; and the noblest of all lessons is the forgiveness of injuries.

Rivers. True, my Lord.—But the principal moral to be drawn from the transactions of to-day is, that those who generously labour for the happiness of others, will, sooner or later, arrive at happiness themselves.

END OF THE FIFTH ACT.

E P I L O G U E.

Written by DAVID GARRICK, Esq.

Spoken by Mrs. DANCER.

WHEN with the comic muse a bard hath dealing,
The traffic thrives when there's a mutual feeling;
Our author boasts, that well he chose his plan,
False Modesty!—Himself, an Irishman.
As I'm a woman somewhat prone to satire,
I'll prove it all a bull, what he calls nature;
And you I'm sure, will join before you go,
To maul False Modesty,—from Dublin ho!
Where are these Lady Lambtons to be found?
Not in these riper times, on English ground.

*Among the various flowers which sweetly blow,
To charm the eyes, at Almack's and Soho,
Pray does that weed, False Delicacy, grow?*

O No.———

*Among the fair of fashion; common breeding,
Is there one bosom, where Love lies a bleeding?*

*In olden times your grannams unrefin'd,
Ty'd up the tongue, put padlocks on the mind;*

O, Ladies, thank your stars there's nothing now confin'd.

In love you English Men,—there's no concealing,

Are most, like Winworth, simple in your dealing;

But Britons, in their natures as their names,

Are different as the Shannon, Tweed, and Thames.

As the Tweed flows, the bonny Scot proceeds,

Wunds slaw, and sure, and nae obstruction heeds;

Though oft repuls'd, his purpose still hands fast,

Sticks like a burr, and wins the Lass at last.

The Shannon, rough and vigorous, pours along,

Like the bold accents of brave Paddy's tongue:

Arrah, dear creature—can you scorn me so?

Cast your sweet eyes upon me, top and toe!

Not fancy me?—Pooh!—that's all game and laughter,

First marry me, my jew'l—ho!—you'll love me after.

Like his own Thames, honest John Trot, their brother,

More quick than one, and much less bold than Pother,

Gentle not dull, his loving arms will spread;

But stopt—in willows hides his bashful head;

John leaves his home, resolv'd to tell his pain;

Hesitates—I—love—Fye, Sir—'tis in vain,—

John blushes, turns him round, and whistles home again.

Well! is my painting like?—Or do you doubt it?—

What say you to a trial?—let's about it.

Let Cupid lead three Britons to the field,

And try which first can make a damsel yield;

What say you to a widow?—Smile consent,

And she'll be ready for experiment.

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WORD TO THE WISE

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AN ADDRESS TO THE PUBLIC.

THE comedy here offered to the world, having been banished from the theatre, through the rage of political prejudice, and the author having, through that prejudice, been no less attacked in his reputation than wounded in his fortune, it becomes necessary for him to justify his character as a man, however poor his abilities may be as a writer.—Popular resentment has had its victim, and the sacrifice being now over, perhaps a few words may be heard in his defence.

For a considerable time, previous to the exhibition of the following scenes, two charges were industriously propagated against the author; and to these charges the unexampled severity exercised on his play may be wholly attributed: The first was, that Mr. Kelly prostituted the Public Ledger, a daily paper then under his direction, to the purposes of administration, in consequence of an annual pension he received; and, instead of conducting it upon principles of impartiality, would admit no letters whatever, unless professedly written in favour of government.—This accusation, though constantly rendered absurd by his readiness to insert every proper letter on each side of every public subject, gained no little credit, but gained it entirely among those who would not be at the trouble of examining into the truth.—At length the calumny grew serious enough to demand some notice, and accordingly, on the 14th of February, 1769, the following reply was published in the Ledger, to a fresh attack, by an anonymous correspondent, upon the independency of that paper.

“We can assure this gentleman (meaning the correspondent) that we have never suppressed any thing in favour of Mr. Wilkes’s cause, which was in the least proper for publication: But declare on the
“contrary,

"contrary, that we always *have* been and always *shall* be as ready to
 "insert the productions of his friends, as the letters of his enemies.—
 "Many pieces on *both* sides have reached us, which we were under a
 "necessity of rejecting, because they were too dangerous, or too absurd
 "for admittance: yet we can with great truth aver, that we strictly
 "keep to our title, and maintain the most dispassionate impartiality,—
 "we profess *ourselves open to all parties*, and cannot consistently with
 "this profession refuse *any* performance which seems dictated by a spirit
 "of candour, or an appearance of rational argument. Our corre-
 "spondent, therefore, before he calls us *partial*, should really *prove* us
 "so; and should first of all favour us with his essays in *defence* of Mr.
 "Wilkes, before he pronounces positively, that we will *not* indulge
 "them with a *place*.

"In fact, a paper to maintain a *real* impartiality, must be actuated by
 "the principles of *justice*, not by the fear of *censure* on the one hand,
 "nor the hope of *approbation* on the other; and the conductors of it,
 "must be more solicitous to *deserve* the applause of their readers, than to
 "obtain it.—Had the managers of the Ledger, for instance, rejected any
 "piece which came *against* the cause of Mr. Wilkes, through an ap-
 "prehension of incurring the popular displeasure, they would have vio-
 "lated the assurance of *impartiality*, which they have so solemnly given
 "to the public, and the opponents of that gentleman would have a rea-
 "sonable plea to reproach them with their palpable breach of faith. To
 "accuse them consequently of *partiality*, argues a *partiality* in their
 "accusers; and it is rather unfair in those, to deny others a liberty of
 "speaking upon national affairs, who constantly lay claim to such a
 "privilege themselves.

"These gentlemen must however remember, that, though the Ledger
 "is *open* to all parties, it is influenced by *none*: And that the conduc-
 "tors, to *merit* the good opinion of *all*, must no more make a sacrifice
 "of their justice at the shrine of *popularity*, than at the altar of *govern-*
 "*ment*: they can therefore only repeat, that the advocates for Mr.
 "Wilkes will always be as acceptable to them, as any other correspon-
 "dents, and they *call* upon his friends in this manner, to favour them
 "with productions in his defence. What more can be desired at their
 "hands? If the popular writers decline this candid invitation, the edi-
 "tors

"tors of the Ledger are entirely free from blame. They have bound themselves in a promise of undeviating impartiality to the *whole* public, and must by no means act inequitably to those who *do* oblige them with pieces for insertion, out of an unreasonable deference for those who *do not*."

This advertisement Mr. Kelly flattered himself would effectually undeceive the public; but here he was unhappily disappointed. Many who had repeatedly heard the charge against him, never once honoured the defence with a perusal; while many more who really read it, considered the very candour of its declaration as a proof of criminality, and would not allow any weight to the argument of *justice*, when opposed to what they looked upon as the cause of the people.—Mr. Kelly, however, determined, at all events, to do his duty, conducted the Ledger on its customary plan of *impartiality*, and many of the most popular gentlemen who have arraigned his conduct in the capacity of a public editor, well know that their letters, instead of being rejected, have been frequently inserted at the warning of an hour.—Besides, a review of the Ledger, during Mr. Kelly's superintendency, will convince the most incredulous, that the severest animadversions were admitted on the proceedings of administration.—It was not Mr. Kelly's fault, if the publications on the contrary side were the most numerous.—The correspondents of a newspaper will make it what they please, and the editor is not to consider in whose favour they write, but whether their writings are proper for insertion.—Whatever Mr. Kelly's own sentiments might be on political affairs, this was the only object of his inquiry: and it will appear, on a retrospect of the pieces printed, while he directed the Ledger, that Mr. Kelly has frequently complimented popular writers on account of their abilities, and civilly requested a continuation of their correspondence.—As to Mr. Kelly's own letters in the Ledger, they appeared but occasionally, from the number of volunteers who eagerly crowded to the general service: Yet he will candidly confess, that when they did appear, they were not always in favour of popularity. This constitutes the second charge against him; and as he is above the despicable littleness of prevaricating, he will enter with confidence, and he hopes with decency, upon his justification.

Whether

Whether it has been Mr. Kelly's merit or demerit, to think from principle unpopularly, on the subject of the present unhappy dissensions, he will not pretend to say, but certainly it has been his misfortune; and though several of his discreeter friends repeatedly warned him of the danger his next piece would run on the stage, from an open declaration of his political opinions; still he did not imagine, that his profession as a public writer, was to deprive him of his independence as a man—As he never presumed to be offended with the sentiments of others on matters of a national tendency, he claimed a right of expressing his own; and did not suppose his literary character precluded him from speaking upon a point which was the continual object of literary investigation.—Besides this, he little conceived that the advocates for freedom of thinking, would be the first to manacle the mind; that the professed friends of candour would be the first to condemn without a hearing; and the avowed enemies of oppression be the only persons ready to exercise an unwarrantable severity.—He had, at least, a right to justice, if he had no pretence to favour, and merited surely a trial, though he might afterwards deserve to be condemned.—The heated hour of prejudice, however, is not the hour of sober reflection; at such a season the very virtues of our hearts frequently lead us into mistakes; and we run into excesses which our cooler reason must disapprove, from an actual rectitude of intention. This was the case of numbers who opposed the exhibition of Mr. Kelly's play: they had been told he was a despicable mercenary, hired to write away their liberties, and therefore considered him as a very improper candidate for public approbation—they had been informed, that at the memorable trials of Mr. Gillam, and of the soldier at Guildford, in consequence of the unhappy affair in St. George's fields, he had stood forth an advocate for the effusion of innocent blood; of course they beheld him with detestation; and their motive was really respectable, though their resentment was wholly excited by misinformation or mistake.

It is true, indeed, Mr. Kelly, as well as an account of the two remarkable trials just mentioned, wrote, during the course of our domestic disunion, many other papers in support of government, and in vindication of parliament; but he never exercised his trifling pen where he

did not suppose both to be right, nor delivered a single sentence that was not the result of his amplest conviction.—With regard to the two trials, he represented them as they really *were*, not as they might be *wished* in print, by the *over* zealous advocates of freedom.—And so far was he from being once employed, since his existence, by administration, to exert his poor abilities in their cause, that he here protests, before the public, he never *expected* or *received* the smallest emolument for his little services.—Never was *directly* or *indirectly* connected with a minister in his days, nor has he even at this moment, though suffering so severely on account of his attachment to government, either *solicited* or *received* a shilling compensation for that bread, which he and his family have lost in its defence.

Here possibly Mr. Kelly may be asked, how, “unplaced, unpensioned, no man’s heir or slave,” he could be idle enough to risk the favour of a town, that had honoured him with the warmest marks of approbation in his first dramatic attempt, for the mere purpose of serving a government from which he had not received the minutest favour or protection? To this Mr. Kelly replies, that in serving government, where he thought it *ought* to be served, he looked upon himself as rendering very essential benefit to the community.—Knowing it the duty of every good subject to promote, instead of disturbing, the national tranquillity, he used his humble endeavours, rather to extinguish than animate the torch of public discord, and strove, as far as so insignificant an individual could strive, to wrest it from the hand of every political enthusiast, who madly attempted to set his country in flames. With this view he particularly gave an account of the two trials that have exposed him to so much unmerited obloquy. Being well convinced, that, during the rage of party, truth would undergo a torture upon the wheel of prejudice, Mr. Kelly determined to give a faithful narrative of these remarkable decisions. He accordingly attended; he accordingly gave a real state of both to the world; and though he has been calumniated in the gross, as a shameless abettor of murder; no attempt has hitherto been made to point out, in his representation, the smallest perversion of a fact.—This was easy to be done, had he been employed as the varnisher of guilt, the trials were not carried on in secret, but in the full face of day; not solely before the retainers of a court, but be-

fore the warmest sons of popularity : Mr. Kelly was not culpable if the prisoners were wholly without blame ; he only acquitted those in his relation, who were acquitted by the laws of their country, and only explained *how* that innocence was made apparent, which the too decisive voice of partiality had previously condemned.

Mr. Kelly's account of the trials was received with general surprize, because the public, by a succession of papers in the Daily and other prints, had been taught to consider Mr. Gillam and the soldier unquestionably guilty.—On their acquittal therefore the *intemperate* friends to the popular cause, (Mr. Kelly says the *intemperate* friends, because he knows many of the most rational, as well as the most worthy members of the community, from *principle* in opposition,) wished to throw a stigma on the court, where they were tried, and wished to prejudice the world with an opinion, that both owed their preservation more to the dexterity of judicial chicanery, than to their real innocence.—Mr. Kelly, however, by setting the transactions in a plain, an honest light, prevented the intended insult to the courts, but drew the whole weight of party resentment upon himself, and the doctrine having been long successfully inculcated among the people, that whoever spoke, much less whoever wrote, against popular prejudices, must necessarily be the hireling of government, Mr. Kelly became gradually stigmatized into such a portion of political consequence, that the suppression of this comedy was considered as a triumph over administration ; so that the curtain was no sooner raised on the first night, than a loud hissing prevented the performers from beginning the play a considerable time ;—while on the other hand, the plaudits of Mr. Kelly's numerous friends, to whose goodness he stands eternally indebted, as well as of the unprejudiced, who desired to give him a fair hearing, and afterwards to express their censure or approbation, rendered the confusion general. At last the performance commenced—but went on with incessant interruptions, except only in the third act, to the conclusion. The performers, totally disconcerted by the tumult, were unable to exercise their abilities, or to remember their parts—whole speeches, essentially necessary to the conduct of the fable, were left out, and others mutilated for the sake of brevity.—In short, the sole consideration was to get the comedy through the five acts in *any manner*.—This, with much difficulty, was effected,

it was given out for the following Monday. A new contest now arose: the opposers of the play insisted, with an unc customary severity, that it should never be exhibited again.—The supporters insisted that it should, on the Monday, according to the public intimation from Mr. King; but Mr. Kelly, fearing the consequences of a dispute that appeared extremely serious, proposed behind the scenes, to withdraw his piece at once, for the sake of restoring peace, and the tragedy of Cymbeline was given out in its room.

This conciliating measure, however, was not attended with the desired effect. The friends of the play, who were greatly the majority, would by no means admit the comedy to be withdrawn; and, after the farce, above two hundred gentlemen calling out for the manager, and threatening immediate demolition to the house, if *A Word to the Wise* was not performed, as originally given out, Mr. Lacy, the only manager then in town, sent Mr. Hopkins, the prompter, to assure the company it should, and all terminated peaceably for that evening.

It was no difficult matter to foresee that the theatre, on the succeeding Monday night, would be a scene of fresh tumult; and the consequences appearing more and more alarming to Mr. Kelly, he went to Mr. Garrick, who came to town on the Sunday morning, to consult with him on the best means of preserving peace; and it was concluded, that Mr. Kelly should wait on his friends, and request that they would give up the point.—Mr. Kelly accordingly did so, observing, that the interests of a single individual were of little consideration, when weighed against the repose of a whole public.—He observed, as he has repeatedly done in the course of the present narrative, that prejudices had been strongly propagated against him, and that the very severity he had experienced from many of his enemies, though unjustifiable in the manner, yet in the motive was really laudable. The moment of party-heat, he frequently added, was not the moment to reason; and that however he might be injured in his circumstances, by the suppression of his play, he would suffer the injury with pleasure, if he could by any means restore the tranquillity of the town, which he had so unhappily, though so innocently, disturbed.—To this his friends replied, that the cause was not his cause now, but the public's; that if party disputes were once introduced into the theatre, our most rational amusements must be

quickly at an end; that the number of writers at present for the stage was sufficiently small, and that they would not suffer the town to be controuled in its pleasures from private pique or personal resentment: all they contended for, was a fair hearing for the piece; that if it deserved condemnation, they themselves would be the first to give it up; but, till it received an equitable trial, they would not allow a triumph to prejudice professed, and acknowledged partiality.

In this state the affair rested till the Monday evening, when, on Mr. King's appearance, to speak the prologue, the opposition, with increased numbers, hissed, cat-called, and threw oranges: on the other side the demand for the new play was equally violent, the supporters turned several out of the house, whom they considered as general disturbers; however Mr. Garrick went on, in the author's name, with a formal renunciation of every emolument, of every reputation arising from his small endeavours for the public amusement; adding, that he was not only ready, but desirous to concur with their pleasure, though to the total disappointment both of his wishes and interest, and begged the sacrifice he then so chearfully offered might be allowed to terminate the contention. Things nevertheless continued in the same confusion for a considerable time,—during which, Mr. Garrick often retired and returned,—but at last advanced with a paper in his hand, from Mr. Kelly, containing a written repetition of the foregoing request, and desiring permission, as the only means of re-establishing harmony, to withdraw his comedy wholly from the theatre.

When Mr. Garrick attempted to read this paper, a demand was made from the gallery, to know whether it was a political production; but though the demand occasioned no little laughter among the opposers of the piece, it only augmented the spirit of the author's friends, by rendering the views of party still more and more visible.—The play of Cymbeline being loudly insisted upon on the one hand, was loudly prohibited on the other; and near three hours having passed in acts of annoyance and hostility, Mr. Kelly was so exceedingly alarmed for the event, that he came himself into the front boxes, and from the front boxes, on the galleries calling out they could not see him, into the pit, and there turning towards the audience, he expressed his apprehensions for their safety, begged they would be satisfied with what he had done, which

which was all he had in his power to do for their preservation, and not, by injuring one another, wound him irreparably in his peace.

Though in no degree so successful as he wished, he nevertheless so far prevailed, that a proposition on his retiring was suggested for *False Delicacy* to be given the ensuing night, for his benefit by way of compromise: a gentleman then stood up in the pit, and asked Mr. Garrick, whether consenting to these measures would, or would not, be an impediment to Mr. Kelly's bringing any future productions on the stage—to which that gentleman had no sooner given a negative, than a second person from the gallery cried out, Expulsion means incapacitation. Mr. Kelly, acquainted with these particulars, went to Mr. Garrick and declined the favour intended him—observing, that he by no means meant to wring a benefit from the charity of the public—that if he deserved one benefit he was entitled to three, and that the theatre had already sustained sufficient loss upon his account.—But Mr. Garrick generously told him, that the theatre was much the best able to bear a loss; though, supposing the case otherwise, neither he nor Mr. Kelly, as public men, had a right on that occasion to dispute a determination of the public. Here the matter rested for that night; as there was no play, the money was returned, and the audience retired seemingly well reconciled.

Notwithstanding the compromise of the foregoing evening, and notwithstanding Mr. Kelly desired that the play bills should contain no intimation that the performance of *False Delicacy* was intended for his benefit, a report universally prevailed that the opposition were determined not to suffer the exhibition of *False Delicacy*, which had long been honoured with the approbation of all parties, merely because it was written by the author of *A Word to the Wise*. Mr. Kelly on this, imagining that the circumstance of his being to receive the profits of the night, and not any objection which could be raised to an established comedy, must be the sole foundation of this fresh resentment, waited upon his friends, and begged they would allow him to relinquish his title to these profits, since they were so likely to renew the disturbances of the theatre. His friends, however, were for a long time inflexible—they pronounced a violation of the compromise, no less injurious to the public, than insulting to them, and added, that they would never have

have listened to any compromise, if he had not been so importunately solicitous to give up every thing for peace—but Mr. Kelly representing the prejudice the managers must necessarily sustain, by a contention of the present nature between the public, and pointing out the prejudice also which every individual belonging to the play-house must necessarily sustain, by an interruption of the customary business—his friends yielded to these arguments, and permitted Mr. Kelly to forego the advantages of the night, to prevent the managers and the performers from suffering in a dispute, where it was equally their interest and their duty to consult the wishes of the auditors.

These precautions being taken by Mr. Kelly, he repaired to the theatre on the Tuesday evening with some degree of satisfaction; but, on the opening of the play the confusion was as violent as ever, though Mr. Garrick, from Mr. Kelly, assured the opposition, that the play was not to be performed for the benefit of the author—This assurance however was by no means sufficient; the comedy of *False Delicacy* was written by Mr. Kelly, and therefore, though in possession of the stage among the number of stock plays, was now to be condemned—to effect this purpose, an uproar in the theatre was not only judged necessary, but the following hand-bill was distributed at all the doors.

TO THE PUBLIC.

“YOU cannot be ignorant that one wretch in that infamous banditti, hired by administration to explain away the rights of an insulted people, is the author of *A Word to the Wife*. As a comic writer, his universal want of abilities has rendered him contemptible. As a politician, his principles are detestable. For these united reasons, you were pleased to forbid the representation of his play on Saturday, and prevent its performance last night.

“The author himself begged leave to withdraw it: yet his party are now determined, that you shall support the writer, though you reject the play. This night’s representation is for his *benefit*. Shall he with impunity assume a power repugnant to your own?—If the privilege of managers be imposition, the duty of an English audience must be obedience.”

Tuesday, March 6, 1770.

The

The heat with which proceedings were thus conducted on the part of opposition, gave room to imagine, that the audience would, as upon the preceding night, be dismissed without any play.—But Mr. Kelly's friends were now no longer able to suppress their indignation, and being determined to make no farther concessions, they exerted themselves so effectually, that *False Delicacy* was performed, though with very considerable interruption.—Whole speeches, nay, whole scenes were obliged to be omitted, and such was the rage of undistinguishing prejudice, that it even attacked the personal safety of the female performers.—This was not all, when the attempt to suppress *False Delicacy* proved abortive, the enemies of the author demanded their money, and appeared unwilling to pay for the mischief they really *did*, because they had not effected as much as they actually *wished* to do.

The conclusion of the farce happily produced a general calm, and though the theatrical horizon seemed pregnant with a storm the succeeding evening, its serenity still continued, and perhaps, will never be again disturbed by any of Mr. Kelly's productions. There is nothing more necessary to add with regard to the exhibition of *A Word to the Wife*, than that such was the judicious conduct of Mr. Garrick and Mr. King, that what they gained on the one hand, they never lost on the other,—for, as the amusement of the public had, in the first instance, been the only object of their attention, so it was apparent the public tranquillity was, in the second, the only object of their care: And whatever inconveniencies they themselves might be exposed to, they were incapable of deviating from the rules of politeness, of good sense, and manly condescension.

After a sacrifice of his interest, so ample, so unreserved, for the sake of restoring tranquillity in the theatre, it might perhaps be expected that Mr. Kelly's enemies would have thought themselves sufficiently gratified; but prejudice has many appetites to glut, and we seldom listen to the sentiments of justice, where we have publicly committed a violence upon our reason.—It was therefore no way wonderful, though his cause was the common cause of letters, to find many of the periodical prints constantly filled with the grossest scurrilities against him; but in this they rather gratified his pride, than wounded his sensibility; they only exalted him on the roll of slander, among the most illustrious characters

acters in the kingdom, and made him an object of importance, by making him an object of implacable resentment.

One attack, however, he cannot help mentioning in this place, though it leads to a repetition of the Guildford Trial, because it came from a quarter wholly unexpected; and from a quarter also too respectable to be overlooked, from the reverend Mr. Horne, at the meeting of the Middlesex freeholders at Mile-End, on Friday the 30th of April. At this meeting Mr. Horne, in summing up the various grievances under which he supposed the nation groaning from the tyranny of administration, took occasion to descant on the soldier's trial for the murder of the unfortunate Mr. Allen, and expressed himself thus—"It is necessary to give you an account of Maclean's trial, because the judge forbade its being taken down by any one, *except it was government.*" "It has never been published—A very false account of this trial has indeed been published by Mr. KELLY, who was paid and brought to Guildford for that purpose, and who had lodgings taken for him there, and who was familiarly conversant with a gentleman, whose name I shall not mention now, lest it should seem to proceed from resentment in me, for an account I have to settle with him next week; however one circumstance I ought to tell you; this gentleman was foreman of the grand jury."—

Without dwelling on Mr. Horne's extraordinary tenderness to the gentleman whose name he will not mention, while he points him clearly out to every apprehension, Mr. Kelly will suppose that what was asserted with regard to him, Mr. Horne himself believed to be indisputably true—Nay, Mr. Kelly is seriously of this opinion, because many gentlemen of unquestionable veracity have assured him, that, abstracted from the intemperance of party, Mr. Horne is in his understanding enlarged, and in his disposition liberal. On these accounts however, Mr. Kelly differed from the politician, he always respected Mr. Horne's private character, and did justice to what he considered the well meaning, though mistaken zeal of the spirited freeholder, in the moment of his deepest concern at hearing a minister of peace, preaching discord through his country, and expressing an impatience of dying the vestments of his sacred function, in the blood of his fellow-subjects.

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But though Mr. Kelly readily makes this concession in favour of Mr. Horne's private character, he must observe, that the constitution of this country, for the purity of which Mr. Horne is so strenuous an advocate, does not allow the mere *belief* of any man to be *positive* evidence, nor compliment his simple *conjecture* with the force of a *fact*.—For this reason, Mr. Horne should be extremely cautious how he asserts any thing to the prejudice of another's reputation; *bearsay* authority is not enough for this purpose; he should know, of his own *knowledge*, what he asserts upon his own *word*; and be *certain* in his *proof*, where he is *peremptory* in his *accusation*.—If a circumspection of this nature is necessary in every man of honour, it must give Mr. Horne much mortification to hear, after he has represented Hugh Kelly, to the freeholders of Middlesex, as a venal scribbler, a shameless instrument of power, an atrocious defender of murder, that the whole charge should be utterly groundless.—That Kelly's account of Maclean's trial should be very true in every circumstance, that Kelly never expected or received a shilling for writing it, and that in the course of his days he has not once changed a syllable with Mr. Onslow, notwithstanding the *conversant familiarity* at Guildford.

Strange, however, as all these things must appear, after Mr. Horne's positive affirmation to the contrary, all these things are most religiously veritable; and Mr. Horne is in this public manner called upon to prove an iota of his charge; it is his business to support his own allegations, not Mr. Kelly's, to endeavour at establishing negatives.—Let him therefore spiritedly proceed to his proofs.—He has pronounced Mr. Kelly guilty, let him now shew in what his guilt consists.—The most tyrannical minister can do no more than convict without evidence—in him, however, despotism is to be expected. But surely the rigid advocate for justice will not follow so dangerous an example; he will act reasonably while he contends for reason, and conduct himself upon principles of legality, while he is generously struggling for the preservation of the laws.

In reality, if there is no more foundation in Mr. Horne's celebrated speech, for the charges brought against government, than for the charges urged against Mr. Kelly, the catalogue of public grievances is rather

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ludicrous

ludicrous than melancholy. But without troubling Mr. Horne to support his assertions, Mr. Kelly will shew these very assertions self-refuted; he will prove them as inconsistent, as they are positive, and rest his defence entirely on the nature of Mr. Horne's accusation.

Mr. Horne sets out with saying that the judge would not suffer the trial to be taken down by any body, except it was for government.—Several nevertheless took it down, and among the rest Mr. Chinnery and Mr. Gurney the professed short-hand writers.—Numbers besides committed the most material passages to paper, and some to Mr. Kelly's knowledge *not* for government; but, Mr. Kelly will say, that had he been hired by *administration* for the infamous purpose Mr. Horne mentions, it is not likely that the use of a pen would have been at all permitted in the court; it is not likely, that the judge would allow a *real* account of a trial to be taken, where a prostitute writer was particularly employed to *misrepresent* it, nor is it likely that the ministry, while wishing to stand well with the world, would furnish such palpable evidence of its own dishonour.—If there was any thing illegal in the proceeding of the court,——If an unwarrantable stretch of power rescued the prisoner from justice, why has not the transaction been held up to universal indignation?—Why is it not recorded in the list of grievances presented to the throne?—To make a solemn court of judicature the pandar of despotic authority would have been a crime of the first magnitude; it would have shaken the constitution to its centre, and overwhelmed the minister with inevitable destruction.—But, wicked as some gentlemen in opposition might suppose the Government, they could not suppose it weak enough to overturn the laws thus desperately at once, for the mere end of saving a private foot-soldier from punishment; a pardon was an easy expedient, and mercy was not then considered criminal.—Besides, were the ostensible men in power as ruthless as they have been painted, they would have given the prisoner up at once, they would have been regardless of his fate, nor would they have attempted to save him from the gibbet, by methods that must have unavoidably hurried themselves to the block. The question is not, whether the unhappy Mr. Allen lost a son, but whether that son fell by the hands of Maclean?—Humanity is melted when it thinks of a slaughtered

tered child, and a weeping father—But humanity must still be just—it must not wish for victims without guilt, nor dry up the tears of sorrowing relations with a sacrifice of unoffending blood.

The last part of Mr. Horne's assertion is to the full as extraordinary as the first. Mr. Kelly is made culpable for being *familiarly conversant* with the foreman of the grand jury at *Guildford*; though certainly, if there was a necessity for any mention of the grand jurymen, he ought to be mentioned with respect; because the grand jury *found* the bill *against* Maclean, and consequently, in that circumstance, advanced the very wishes of popularity—Instead therefore of condemning Mr. Kelly for his intimacy with Mr. Onslow, in the present case, that intimacy ought to be an argument in Mr. Kelly's favour—But the truth is, Mr. Kelly, in the whole course of his existence, never once spoke to Mr. Onslow, the grand jurymen alluded to, knowing who he was, nor he believes at any rate, because he knows Mr. Onslow's person, and is flattered with the possession of a tolerable memory—however, if Mr. Horne has evidence to the contrary—let him produce it—if not, let him, for the future, be more certain of his facts, or less peremptory in his assertions.

But possibly, though Mr. Horne is a strong enemy to examination by interrogatory, he may nevertheless choose to ask Mr. Kelly what business carried him to Guildford, if he did not go as a literary prostitute in favour of government? To this Mr. Kelly will reply with another question, What business had Mr. Horne there? Mr. Kelly surely has as much right to indulge his curiosity, and to support what he conceives a just cause, as that gentleman—Mr. Horne cannot be a warmer well-wisher to true freedom, and to national happiness than Mr. Kelly, though he pursues a very different plan of promoting them—Mr. Kelly's political opinions may be erroneous—but his intention is right—Had he been the venal thing he is represented, he might have carried his venality to a certain market—Popular applause is always fortune to a public writer of prudence, and the part Mr. Kelly has taken may be an impeachment of his judgment, but argues no depravity of his heart.

Upon the whole, with regard to Mr. Horne, if Mr. Kelly's account of the Guildford trial is false, let Mr. Horne point the fallacy out; if Mr. Kelly has been hired to write it, let Mr. Horne mention by whom—

and if it is criminal to be *familiarly conversant* with Mr. Onslow, let Mr. Horne support a single instance of Mr. Kelly's familiarity with that gentleman.——Mr. Horne soon after Mr. Kelly's account of the Guildford trial appeared, promised the world *a true state* of that remarkable affair, and if Mr. Kelly shamefully misrepresented facts, the appearance of Mr. Horne's pamphlet was doubly necessary.——That pamphlet has never yet appeared; and it cannot be supposed that a temper so ready to fire at light occasions as Mr. Horne's, would suppress it, had there been any material cause of complaint to lay before the people.

Mr. Kelly has taken up a great deal of room with his trifling concerns, for which he ought to apologize, but as the publication of his play by subscription, proceeded entirely from the generous partiality of his friends, he thought it his duty to let them at least see, that though they might be supporting a dull writer, they were encouraging an honest man.——The piece, with all its imperfections on its head, is now before the world; and the author hopes, if it should even set the reader fast asleep, that nothing it contains will rouse his indignation: the most careful father, he thinks, may put it into the hands of his daughter, without any fear of wounding her delicacy, or unhinging her principles.——This is its chief, perhaps its only merit, and perhaps, had it been heard on the stage with patience, it might have been condemned with justice.——Mr. Kelly will therefore console himself with his optimist Willoughby, by thinking every thing happens for the best, and look upon that very prejudice, which has suppressed his poor performance, as ultimately fortunate, since it may have been the means of preserving his little share of reputation.

He cannot, however, conclude this address without an observation or two upon the melancholy situation of dramatic writers—and as it is possible that he himself may never more venture a production on the stage, he hopes what he has further to advance, will merit an additional consideration from his readers.

The great decline of dramatic genius in this country, has been for many years an object of general concern with the public, and the lovers of the theatre have ardently wished, that some happy stimulus might be discovered to encrease the number of writers for the stage; yet, though this wish has prevailed universally, and though the credit, as well as
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the emolument arising from a successful play is not a little tempting; still the danger attending the representation of the best pieces, is so considerable, that the few writers blessed with easy fortunes do not choose to run the hazard, and most of those who live by the sale of their productions, are content to follow studies less profitable, for a more certain reward of their labours.

Besides this, the difficulty, the toil, the downright drudgery of writing a good play is inconceivable; it is a work which requires long time and a close application; it is a work in which neither the most extensive erudition, nor the most accurate understanding can ensure an author success.—In every other species of composition, judgment, genius, and education are almost certain of triumph—but here knowledge of the world is indispensably requisite.—An acquaintance with the manners, and with the passions is requisite.—Nor are these sufficient without an invention to strike out variety; and a skill to produce effects, by a forcible display of situation.—It is not the good sense only of an audience which is addressed—but their feelings; they must be agreeably surprised while they are publicly instructed, and the Muse, like other beauties, must be ravishing to the general eye, before she can be dear to the general heart.

When, therefore, the difficulty attending a dramatic work is so considerable; when perhaps there is another considerable difficulty to get a play received by the stage, and another still to find a capital company of performers to represent it, instead of wondering that the number of writers is so small, we should in reality wonder how it is so respectable.—But, if we look still farther, we shall be surprised that *any* author risks his bark upon the dangerous ocean of the theatre.—It is a melancholy truth, that the people who write most for the stage, are rather remarkable for their ingenuity than their opulence.—On this account a disappointment to them is an essential misfortune. Yet a few private enemies can at all times frustrate their expectations. In vain an unfortunate man of letters may labour for many months with a laudable view of entertaining the town, and improving his own circumstances;—and in vain he may exert his utmost efforts to merit the protection of an audience, if he has unhappily given one individual an offence. The moment his piece is talked of, a party is possibly formed to damn it; and

and many who would not join in this party from malevolence, give it countenance, for the pleasure, as it is called, of *kicking up a riot in the playhouse*.—Thus the littleness of personal pique, and the levity of inconsiderate laughter, have the poet totally at their mercy.—The curtain rises, and the storm begins; nor can the generous interposition of nine tenths among the auditors preserve the play from destruction. There is as much confusion created by the desire of “*go on, go on,*” as by the cry, “*go off, go off.*” Whatever disturbs the representation has a tendency to injure it; so that a performance exhibited during a state of contention must despair of success;—the supporters constantly interrupted have no opportunity of being entertained, and, naturally enough, perhaps attribute the fault to the author; while the opposition decisively pronouncing upon what is predetermined not to hear, kindly brands him with the epithet of an incorrigible dunce, and, not content with the injury done to his fortune, makes an equal attack upon his literary character.

Such being the situation of dramatic genius in this country, let the public themselves judge, whether an author has any mighty encouragement to write for the stage.—Perhaps the poet, treated in the manner now described, has no dependence but his talents; perhaps upon the success of the very piece thus suppressed he built his chief establishment in life, and founded every future prospect of bringing up a growing family with reputation.—What must his feelings then be, to find his hopes all blasted in a single hour—to find the very labour, possibly of years, destroyed in an instant, by the people for whose entertainment he laboured; and to see the bread not only wrested from the hands of his unoffending little ones, but to see them even exposed to the still persecuting resentment of prejudice, for the imaginary offences of their father.—What must be his feelings—Yet forbear humanity to enquire—the answer will harrow up your bosom—Generosity, turn away from the picture, it must deluge you with tears.—The scene of poetical distress, however, sketched to the reader’s imagination, thanks to the goodness of Providence, is far from being Mr. Kelly’s situation; but it often has been, and often may be, the situation of a much worthier man.—Mr. Kelly is affluent beyond his merits—nay, beyond his utmost hopes, he possesses the riches of content in a very extensive manner, and can sit

down to his humble repast with pleasure, in the honest recollection that it is punctually paid for.

The difficulties here pointed out, for dramatic genius to encounter, are difficulties to which every writer for the stage is constantly exposed; but the danger becomes infinitely more formidable, if, in times of party feud, he renders himself in the least disagreeable to the popular side of the question; the unreflecting virtue of numbers then, as in Mr. Kelly's case, will arm against him, and think it meritorious to condemn the production, that punishment may be inflicted upon the imputed delinquency of the man.—In times like the present, therefore, what is a dramatic writer to do?—To hold his tongue, replies cold-blooded prudence.—And what has the unfortunate man of letters committed, that he alone of all the community is to be denied the privilege of speaking his sentiments? Say, ye various sons of science, will you submit to this despicable slavery of the mind? Are you, above the generality of mankind, distinguished for your education and your understanding, to be refused an opinion, where an opinion is deemed the birth-right of your meanest fellow-subject? Shall it be your glory to inculcate lessons of generosity and independence, and yet be your crime to practise these lessons yourselves?—Shall your writings breathe the noblest spirit of candour, and your lives be a round of the poorest dissimulation?—Shall you think your country in danger, and yet be afraid to speak a syllable for its preservation?—No, you will not tear the finer principles from your breasts; you will not set an example of so abject a dissimulation.—Whatever meets the approbation of your judgment, will be supported by the sanction of your voice, and however you may meet with reproach, you will at least be careful not to deserve it.—When administration is indefensible, you will be too honest to combat in its cause; but, at the same time, you will not hesitate to condemn the errors of popularity.—You will be always animated by a real solicitude for the public, and be as careful to guard against the extravagance of its over-zealous friends, as to provide against the machinations of its most politic enemies.—Acting thus you may be poor, but you will ever be respectable.—Posterity will do you justice, if you are even oppressed by your contemporaries, and you will find ample resources in the consciousness of your integrity, to compensate for the severest disappointments in your fortune.

To

To conclude—If men of talents have an equal right of thinking with the rest of their fellow-subjects, and if they are not precluded by the generally acknowledged superiority of their understandings, from declaring their sentiments upon subjects of national importance, the lovers of the drama must see that nothing can be so dangerous to the existence of genius, as the introduction of political disputes into the theatre. The party which condemns a writer of different principles on one day, may see a favourite author, sacrificed the very next by their enemies in politics; and the violence may continue till there is scarcely an individual hardy enough to furnish our managers with a piece. The state of the stage is at present sufficiently deplorable; and its literature, instead of wanton opposition, calls loudly for the generous hand of public encouragement. Give it this encouragement therefore, ye wise, and ye worthy—rescue your writers from the worst of all tyrannies, and no longer form your minds by the sentiments of those, who are not allowed to possess any minds of their own.

THIS

THIS
COMEDY
IS INSCRIBED TO
ROBERT LADBROKE, Esq.

AS A PUBLIC TESTIMONY
OF THE
VERY HIGH ESTEEM

IN WHICH
THE AUTHOR HOLDS HIS FRIENDSHIP,
AND A SINCERE MARK

OF THE
VERY JUST RESPECT HE ENTERTAINS
FOR
HIS PRIVATE CHARACTER.

M

WRITTEN BY M. KELLY
C. STICKNEY

WELL KNOWN
REGISTERED TRADE MARK

THE
REGISTERED TRADE MARK

THE
REGISTERED TRADE MARK

THE
REGISTERED TRADE MARK

P R O L O G U E.
WRITTEN BY MR. KELLY.
SPOKEN BY MR. KING.

*W*ELL, here you are, and comfortably squeez'd—

But do you come quite willing to be pleas'd?—

Say, do you wish for bravo—fine—encore—

Or—his—off, off,—no more—no more—no more—

Though for true taste I know the warmth you feel,

A roasted poet is a glorious meal—

And oft I've known a miserable wit,

Thro' downright laughter, fasten'd on the spit,

Basted with cat-call sauce, for very fun,

Not till quite ready—but till quite undone—

And yet you serv'd the puppy as you ought!—

How dare he think to tell you of a fault—

What fair one here from prudence ever strays,

What lover here e'er flatters or betrays?

What husband here is ever found to roam,

What wife is here that does not doat on home?

In yon gay circle, not a blooming face

From Club's rude king cou'd point you out the ace;

No sober trader, in that crowded pit,

'Till clear broad day, will o'er his bottle sit;

Nor while our commerce fatally decays,

Erect his villa, or set up his chaise—

Nay, you above, in cake-consuming bowers,

Who thro' whole Sundays munge away your hours;

You are so mild, so gentle, that ev'n here,

Your sweet-ton'd voices never wound the ear;

Ne'er make the house for tune, or prologue ring,

Roast-beef—roast-beef—the prologue, prologue—KING—

Why then, thus weigh'd in truth's severest scale,

Shall each pert scribbler impudently rail,

With dull morality disgrace the stage,

And talk of vices in so pure an age!

Your wise forefathers, in politer days,

Had ev'n their faults commended in their plays;

To cheat a friend, or violate a wife,

Was then true humour, comedy, and life—

But now the bard becomes your highest boast,

Whose ill-bred pen traduces you the most;

Whose saucy muse can hardly aver,
 That still a lady possibly can err;
 That still a lord can trick you at a bet,
 And fools and madmen are existing yet—
 Be rous'd at last—nor in an age so nice,
 Let these grave dunces teize you with advice—
 What, tho' some taylor's oft protracted bill
 May hang all trembling on the author's quill,
 Regard it not; remove the growing evil—
 A well-dress'd poet is the very devil—
 Do taverns dun him—What, can scribblers treat?
 Fine times, indeed, when scribblers think to eat—
 Do justice then—to-night, ten minutes here,
 May blast the bard's whole labour of a year—
 What do I see!—resentment in your eyes?
 'Tis true, the fellow at your mercy lies;
 And of all wreaths, the Briton's noblest crown,
 Is ne'er to strike an enemy when down—

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

SIR GEORGE HASTINGS,
 SIR JOHN DORMER,
 WILLOUGHBY,
 CAPTAIN DORMER,
 VILLARS,
 FOOTMEN,

Mr. King.
 Mr. Reddish.
 Mr. Aickin.
 Mr. Palmer.
 Mr. Cauthery.
 { Mr. Watkins.
 { Mr. Wrighten.

W O M E N.

MRS. WILLOUGHBY,
 MISS WILLOUGHBY,
 MISS DORMER,
 MISS MONTAGU,
 JENNY,
 LUCY.

Mrs. Jefferys.
 Mrs. Baddeley.
 Miss Young.
 Mrs. Barry.
 Mrs. Smith.
 Miss Platt.

A

WORD TO THE WISE.

A C T I.

SCENE, *an Apartment in Sir JOHN DORMER's House.*

Enter Sir JOHN DORMER, Miss DORMER, and Miss MONTAGU.

Sir John. **W**ELL but, my dear Caroline, though I grant you that Sir George Hastings has his peculiarities, still you must grant me that he has many very amiable qualities.

Miss Dor. I never denied Sir George's merit, Sir, but all his good qualities cannot conceal his unaccountable coxcombry; his attention is constantly centered in himself, and there is no enduring a man who fancies that every woman must, at first sight, fall violently in love with him.

Sir John. Do you hear her, Miss Montagu?

Miss Mont. Why, Sir John, there is no accounting for inclination, you know;—however, I cannot look upon Sir George, in the very ridiculous light he appears to Miss Dormer.

Miss Dor. No—why he is a Narcissus that continually makes love to his own shadow, and I can't bear the idea of a husband, in whose affection I am likely to be every moment rival'd by the looking-glass.

Miss Mont. Nay now, my dear, you are rather hard upon him.—Sir George may possibly be a little too fond of himself—

Sir John. But that doesn't prevent him from entertaining very tender sentiments for Caroline Dormer.

Miss Mont. He may be unnecessarily attentive to the niceties of dress—

Sir John. But then he is attentive to every law of justice and generosity.

Miss Mont. And if his foibles provoke us to an occasional smile, his worth must always excite our warmest admiration.

Miss Dor. Upon my word, Harriot, a very florid winding up of a period, and very proper for an elevated thought in a sentimental Comedy;—but I tell you, I should relish these encomiums on Sir George well enough, if he was not so particularly recommended to my attention.—I really can't support the imagination of vowing honour and obedience to the object of my own ridicule, and it would mortify my pride beyond conception, to see my husband the constant jest of his acquaintance.

Sir John. My dear Caroline, don't be too difficult in your choice, nor entertain any romantic idea of finding a husband all perfection.—The expectation of too much before marriage, frequently embitters the union after;—and as the best men will have their little blemishes, we may surely number those among the best, in whose characters we can discover nothing more than a few trifling peculiarities.

Miss Dor. I see, Sir, you make a point of this affair.

Sir John. I would not make a point of any thing, my dear, which I thought would be in the least repugnant to your happiness:—but, really, when I consider this proposal in every respect, when I consider the rank, the fortune, and, what is above all, the merit of the man, I cannot but wish that you would give him a favourable reception; and this the more especially, as I am convinced, if the match should take place, that your fine sense and sweetness of temper would easily mould your husband to your wish, and quickly remove every trace of those foibles, which are at present the only grounds of your objection.

Miss Dor. You are very good, Sir.

Sir John. This morning, my dear, Sir George purposed to declare himself in form.—If you can receive his addresses, you will make him happy, and oblige me exceedingly;—but if you cannot, deal ingenuously, and reject him; the justice which I owe to him, as well as the tenderness which I have for you, makes this advice doubly requisite.

Enter

Enter a Servant.

Servant. Mr. Willoughby, Sir.

Sir John. I'll wait upon him instantly. [*Exit Servant.*] Think therefore seriously, Caroline, before you determine, for I neither wish to cheat my friend into the possession of a reluctant heart, nor to sacrifice my daughter to the object of her aversion. [*Exit.*]

Miss Dor. Well, Harriot, what shall I do?—You hear he has actually mentioned him to me in the most serious terms, and that this very morning he is to make a formal declaration.

Miss Mont. And what then, doesn't Sir John desire you to reject him, if he is really disagreeable?—Can you possibly wish for a greater degree of indulgence?

Miss Dor. And yet that very indulgence, my dear Miss Montagu, is likely to render me extremely miserable.

Miss Mont. Why indeed, *Miss Dormer*—remember, child, you complimented me first with the cold, respectful epithet of *Miss*—the men in general say that the surest way of making a woman wretched, is to indulge her inclinations—But pray, my dear, why is this liberty which Sir John allows you, of promoting your own happiness, so very likely to make you miserable.

Miss Dor. Ah, Harriot! don't you see that while he is so generously anxious to consult my wishes, I am bound by gratitude, as well as justice, to pay the greatest regard to his expectations.

Miss Mont. You are really an excellent girl, my dear. But pray answer me one question seriously.

Miss Dor. What is it?

Miss Mont. Is this dislike, which you entertain to your father's choice, entirely the result of your aversion to Sir George? or is it, be honest now, the consequence of a secret partiality for somebody else?

Miss Dor. A secret partiality for somebody else? Pray, my dear, for whom is it likely I should entertain a partiality?

Miss Mont. Caroline, Caroline, this reserve is ill suited both to the nature of our friendship, and the customary frankness of your temper—yet, notwithstanding the secrecy you have hitherto so unkindly observed, I can easily see that Mr. Villars—What, conscious, Caroline?

Miss Dor. O Harriot, spare me—nor be offended that I have endeavoured to keep a secret from you, which I absolutely shudder to whisper to myself—to deal candidly, my dear, I must acknowledge that your charge is but too just—and notwithstanding every effort of my pride, and every argument of my prudence, I find this humble, yet deserving Villars, possesses a much higher place in my esteem, than can be consistent with my happiness.

Miss Mont. Why, to do the young fellow justice, he is really very agreeable, and has something in his manner that would do credit to a more eligible situation—but—

Miss Dor. Ay, Harriot, there's the misfortune—agreeable as he is in every respect, he is still a total dependent on my father; and thinks himself extremely happy that his talents have obtain'd him even a temporary establishment in an opulent family.

Miss Mont. Well, my dear, Sir John is generous, and Mr. Villars is very useful to him in his literary researches; besides, I am not a little pleas'd at the distinction with which he, as well as the Captain, constantly treats Mr. Villars.

Miss Dor. I don't know how it is—Mr. Villars has a manner of commanding respect from every body; he is humble without servility, and spirited—

Miss Mont. Oh! he is every thing that's amiable, no doubt—and the stars have been exceedingly relentless in not giving him a large fortune—however, if I have any skill in the business of the heart, Villars is to the full as uneasy upon your account as you can possibly be on his—he is always contriving excuses for conversing with you, yet when he succeeds, he is in visible confusion; and it was but yesterday evening, when I begg'd he wou'd put a letter for me into the post-office, that he stammer'd out, in the utmost perplexity, “I shall take particular care, Madam, to deliver it to Miss Dormer.”

Miss Dor. If this be the case, Harriot, I must indeed behave with particular circumspection to him; and yet, though I see the impossibility of ever being his, he has given me an insuperable aversion to the rest of his sex.

Miss Mont. What then do you intend to do with Sir George?

Miss

Miss Dor. To reject him; but still to do it without giving any offence to my father.

Miss Mont. And how do you propose to manage it?

Miss Dor. By throwing myself honestly upon Sir George's humanity; by telling him my affection is engaged, and by begging of him to withdraw his addresses in such a manner as shall appear to be the result of his own choice, and not the consequence of my disinclination.—Sir George, notwithstanding his egregious vanity, is uncommonly good-natured—but let us retire to my room, my dear, I am unfit for company at present, and here we are likely to be broken in upon.—O Harriot!

Miss Mont. And O, Caroline, what a very foolish figure does a woman make, when she is lamentably in love! [Exeunt.

Enter Sir GEORGE HASTINGS and CAPTAIN DORMER.

Dor. Well, my brother-in-law elect,—you are very splendidly dress'd this morning.

Sir George. Why, Jack, I think, I do make a pretty tolerable appearance.

Dor. And do you think this appearance calculated to make an impression upon a woman of spirit.—Zounds, man, give up your pretensions, for nothing but a fellow of life is likely to succeed with my sister, I can promise you.

Sir George. A fellow of life, Jack;—that is, I suppose, a fellow of profligacy: truly you pay your sister a very pretty compliment.

Dor. And why, pray, do you necessarily connect the idea of life with the idea of profligacy?

Sir George. Because, in the vocabulary of libertines, like you, Jack, the word life always means a round of every thing that is foolish or unwarrantable.

Dor. Why, what the devil are you turn'd fanatic, George, that you begin to deal so much in second-hand morality?

Sir George. In short, your fellows of spirit never allow a man a scruple of common-sense, till he has entirely prostituted his understanding; nor suppose him to be fit for a commerce with the world, till he absolutely merits to be hunted out of society.

N

Dor.

Dor. Well but, George, there is one excess of which you yourself have been guilty; and I have known the time, when you took a bottle so freely, that you were generally made toast-master of the company.

Sir George. Yes, but I soon found out that drinking was detestable, and toasting the greatest of all absurdities.

Dor. Why how wou'd you wish to pass an evening?—Can any thing exceed the pleasure of society, with a few select friends of good-nature and vivacity?

Sir George. O nothing to be sure is so delightful as guzzling down half a dozen bottles, and enjoying the rational discourse—of where does the toast stand—with you, Sir William—no, with you, Sir George—fill him a bumper, Captain Dormer—fill him to the top.—Yes, an evening spent in this manner must be delectable, especially if a couple of fools should happily quarrel in their cups, and cut one another's throat to prove the superiority of their understanding.

Dor. Ha! ha! ha!—But was this all your objection to the bottle?

Sir George. No, for it made my head ache, and disordered my dress beyond bearing.

Dor. Disordered your dress, ha! ha! ha!

Sir George. To be sure it's a very ridiculous thing for a man to shew a little regard for decency.

Dor. Well notwithstanding you are a coxcomb systematically, I am sure the character will not be a strong recommendation to my sister.

Sir George. Your sister, Jack, is a woman of sense, and must see that she has a much stronger chance of being happy with me, than poor Miss Montagu has of being happy with her brother.—My heart is unadulterated, and is therefore worth any woman's acceptance.

Dor. O no doubt it is a very valuable acquisition.

Sir George. Whereas, you fellows of life hawk about your hearts from commoner to commoner, till they become quite contemptible; and then with the additional merit of broken constitutions,—tottering limbs,—pale cheeks, and hollow eyes, you politely offer the refuse of the stews, to ladies of fortune, family, and character.

Dor. And so your affection is unadulterated!—ha! ha! ha!

Sir George. Ay, laugh on and welcome;—but who have we here?

Dor. Mr. Willoughby, who will keep you in countenance with maxims of musty morality.

Sir George. What, my good-natured optimist, who thinks every thing happens for the best?

Dor. Ay, Candide to perfection; who is continually blessing his stars the more they load him with misfortunes;—and pray Heaven his business here this morning has not been to talk with Sir John about my intimacy in his family. [*aside.*]

Enter WILLOUGHBY.

Will. Sir George, your most obedient.—Captain, I am your humble servant.

Sir George. Mr. Willoughby, yours.—How do the ladies, Sir?—the good Mrs. Willoughby, and your amiable daughter?

Will. Why my daughter, Sir George, is very well;—and my wife is as usual, continually embittering every comfort of life, and lamenting the miseries attendant on mortality.

Sir George. I wonder she does not choose to follow the sensible example you set her, and endeavour rather to lessen, than to aggravate the measure of unavoidable misfortunes.—She's a young woman, and misanthropy at her age is rather out of character.

Will. Why, yes, Sir George, she's twenty good years younger than I am, and yet she is twenty times more impatient under the smallest disappointment.

Sir George. But my good friend, you don't think her youth a very unfortunate circumstance?

Will. O, Sir George, my principle is to think every thing happens for the best.

Dor. Well said, Mr. Willoughby.

Will. It wasn't her youth, however, that struck me, but the sobriety of her conduct, and her affection for my daughter;—she was besides a distant relation of my first wife's—liv'd with us in the same house; and somehow I lik'd her, because having no fortune, it gave her but little expectation of a better husband.

Sir George. But why don't you teach her to adopt some part of your own fortitude under disappointment.

Dor. Perhaps it is not in her power to exercise so desirable a philosophy.

Will. My dear Captain, life has misfortunes enough without our being industrious to increase the number of them—when an accident, therefore, happens, we shou'd consider that, bad as it may be, it might have been still worse; and instead of arrogantly murmuring at the dispensations of providence, we shou'd thankfully acknowledge the goodness, that did not plunge us into a deeper degree of affliction.

Sir George. Upon my word, I think there is much reason in this argument.

Will. Ay, and much policy too, Sir George.—I again say, we shou'd always imagine that every thing happens for the best—about ten years ago I broke my leg by a fall from a horse—

Dor. And pray did this prove a fortunate accident?

Will. Yea; for your father, who generously pitied my situation, got my place continued to my family; so that, if I drop off to-morrow, there's a comfortable provision for them—Indeed, when the accident happened I cou'dn't foresee this consequence—however, I made the best of matters—was thankful that I hadn't broke both my legs, and drew a kind of negative good fortune, from a stroke of real calamity.

Sir George. What the devil is this fellow Dormer laughing at?

Dor. Why, how the devil can I help laughing, when the very evils of life, are made so many indirect instruments of happiness?

Will. Oh! let him laugh, Sir George; he can by no means joke me out of my sentiments—why, when my son was stolen from me in his infancy—I found a consolation in reflecting that I had not lost my daughter too;—and though I have never since been able to hear any account of my poor boy, I am satisfied he was taken from me for the best, and I bear my lot with resignation.

Dor. How! do you set down the loss of your son in the chapter of fortunate accidents?

Sir George. Negatively he may, Dormer; for he might have turned out a libertine like yourself, and in that case his being lost is indeed a very fortunate circumstance.

Dor. Very smart truly—but I suppose you bear your lot with resignation too, Sir George,—for you have lately got a good two thousand
a-year

a year by the death of this young fellow's godfather, old Webly the humorist; and it is your interest to pray that he never may be found, as there is a certain clause in the will you know, which—

Sir George. Which obliges me to invest him with this estate if ever he is discovered—a mighty hardship really; and you must be a very pretty fellow, to suppose it any way difficult for an honest man, to do a common act of justice.

Will. All for the best, Captain—Sir George we are certain will do good with his fortune,—whereas had it been possessed by my boy,—how am I sure that it wou'd not be applied to very different purposes?—Yet who knows that it might either?—who knows but—however [*lifting his emotion*] I am very positive every thing happened for the best,—and so—and so a good morning to you. [*Exit.*]

Sir George. Poor man, how sensibly he feels the loss of his son, notwithstanding his endeavours to be cheerful.—But what am I throwing away my time upon you for, when I have business of so much importance with your sister? Good bye, Jack, and now let us see if profligates only, are to meet encouragement from the ladies. [*Exit.*]

Dor. Ha! ha! ha! was there ever such a compound of sentiment and vanity?—Caroline must keep the fellow in a glass case, or he'll kill himself before the honey-moon is over, with the fatigue of seeing company. [*Going.*]

Enter Sir JOHN.

Sir John. Jack, Jack, come back a little—I want a word or two with you.

Dor. I fear'd as much [*aside.*] What are your commands, Sir?

Sir John. Why, Jack, I need not tell you how anxious I am to have you settled in the world; nor is it necessary for me to put you in mind of the engagement I entered into with my late worthy friend, Sir Ralph Montagu.

Dor. I know your obliging solicitude for me extremely well, Sir, and I feel it with the most grateful sensibility,—but sure there is yet time enough, before I undertake the important charge of a family.

Sir John. Come, come, you have seen enough of the world to become, if you please, a useful member of society,—besides, Miss Montagu.

tagu is now without a father, and shou'd be treated with an additional degree of attention.—Nothing, therefore, can be more improper than to keep a young lady of her merit and fortune, waiting for the result of your determination, when you ought to think it a very great honour that she can be prevail'd upon to receive you as a husband.

Dor. Miss Montagu, Sir, will, I dare say, be no way offended at the delay, if I can judge from the indifference with which she constantly behaves to me.

Sir John. And how can she behave otherwise, when you constantly treat her with indifference?—To be plain with you, however, Jack, I fear you are too wild, too dissipated, to think seriously:—you moreover possess a spirit of gallantry, which gives me many an uneasy moment,—and I am not a little troubled at your continual visits to Mr. Willoughby's.

Dor. To Mr. Willoughby, Sir,—to your own particular friend!

Sir John. Yes, and the more I esteem him, the more uneasy I must naturally be, at your visiting him so frequently.—Miss Willoughby has a fine person, and a feeling heart; she thinks, besides, I have obliged her father, and may in the fulness of her gratitude, imbibe sentiments for the son of his benefactor.—Take care, therefore, take care; gallantry, though a fashionable crime, is a very detestable one; and the wretch who pilfers from us in the hour of his necessity, is an innocent character, compared to the plunderer who wantonly robs us of happiness and reputation.

Dor. I hope, Sir, I shall never do any thing to bring a reflection upon the honour of my family.

Sir John. I hope not, Jack, and therefore I cou'd wish you were not a man of gallantry:—to engage the confidence of the innocent on purpose to betray it, is as mean as it is inhuman.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Every thing is ready in the library, Sir.

Sir John. Very well—[*Exit Servant.*] Come, Jack, think a little on what I have said;—in my son let me for once find a friend;—the honour of my family is now materially trusted in your hands, and though my tenderness for you may feel at any prostitution of that

that honour, be assured that my justice will never allow me to pardon it. [Exit Sir John.]

Enter VILLARS.

Dor. Well, Villars, I fancy Willoughby has at last made a complaint to my father, for I am commanded, in the most positive terms, to think of an immediate marriage with Miss Montagu.

Villars. And isn't it by much the most sensible course you can follow?—Miss Montagu is a very fine young lady.

Dor. True—but you have never seen Miss Willoughby.

Villars. Besides the great fortune—

Dor. Miss Willoughby.

Villars. That courts your acceptance, if I may so express myself—

Dor. Miss Willoughby.

Villars. Oh—I see how it is;—and are you then determined to marry Miss Willoughby?

Dor. Not so fast—not quite so fast, my dear Villars, I beg of you:—Miss Willoughby certainly possesses a greater share of my affection than any other woman in the world; and I don't know, if my father could be brought to approve of such a match, that I should find the least disinclination to marry her:—but as matters stand at present, there's no likelihood of such a circumstance, and therefore I wou'dn't choose to disoblige Sir John in so material a point, especially as my wishes with regard to Miss Willoughby, may possibly be indulged without so considerable a sacrifice.

Villars. I don't understand you.

Dor. Why, Miss Willoughby knew all along of my engagement with Miss Montagu, and consequently had no reason to suppose that my intentions cou'd be very matrimonial; besides, she let nobody into the secret of my addresses but her ridiculous step-mother, who is a miserable compound of avarice and affectation:—indeed, to do the young lady justice, it was a considerable time before she wou'd hear a syllable of a tender nature from me, on account of my connection with Miss Montagu.

Villars. And how did you manage it at last?

Dor. Why, in the customary manner:—I talk'd a damn'd deal of nonsense with a very tragical tone, and a very melancholy countenance—
—exclaim'd:

—exclaim'd against the tyranny of fathers, who wanted to force the inclinations of their children from despicable motives of interest—and curs'd the poor stars for giving her so much beauty, and making me so sensible of it:—then pressing her tenderly by the hand, I usually ran out of the room, as if in violent emotion, affecting to gulp down a torrent of tears, and left her own pity to be my advocate, the moment she recovered the use of her recollection.

Villars. What, and did this answer your purpose, Sir?

Dor. Oh, perfectly; the women are inconceivably fond of the pathetic, and listen to you with rapture, if you talk about death or distraction—spring but the mine of their pity, you soon blow their hearts into a flame—and reap more service from an hour of compleat substantial misery, than from a whole year of the most passionate adoration.

Villars. Well, Captain, and may I presume to ask what use you intend to make of Miss Willoughby's partiality for you.

Dor. Why faith, Villars, that's a very puzzling question upon the whole; notwithstanding all my levity, you know I have the deepest reverence for my father, and he must not be disobliged upon any account,—though to deal honestly with you, I have no mighty inclination to Miss Montagu.

Villars. And what must become of poor Miss Willoughby?

Dor. Why I shou'dn't like to be a rascal there neither.—Yet what can one do?—Where a woman's weak enough to encourage the addresses of a man whom she knows to be pre-engaged, she gives him a kind of title to deceive her:—besides, Villars, Miss Willoughby has herself shewn a genius for duplicity in this affair, which shou'd make a man of sense a little considerate.

Villars. How so, pray?

Dor. Don't you recollect she has deceived her father thro' the whole transaction? And it is a maxim with me that the woman who can forget the sentiment of nature, has half an inclination to forget the sentiments of virtue.

Villars. Poor Miss Willoughby!

Dor. You are mightily concern'd for a woman you never saw in your life; however, be easy—I am as sentimental for a libertine, you know, as any fellow in the kingdom, and it shall be Miss Willoughby's own fault

fault, if matters are carried to extremities.—But, Villars, step with me to my agent's, and we'll talk farther on this subject:—few people despise money more than myself, and yet there are few to whom a snug sum would at this moment be more acceptable.

Villars. You promise me then that in this affair of Miss Willoughby's—

Dor. Zounds, Villars, I won't brag too much neither,—I am still flesh and blood,—and these make a very dangerous composition in the hour of love and opportunity.

Villars. My dear Captain, this is no jesting matter—the happiness of a deserving young lady is at stake, and a laugh will but poorly repay a violation of your honour, or a breach of your humanity. *[Exeunt.]*

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

A C T II.

SCENE, WILLOUGHBY'S House.

Enter Mr. and Mrs. WILLOUGHBY.

Mrs. Will. **A**ND so my prudent, sage, considerate dear, you have actually advised Sir John Dormer to restrain his son's visits to our house?

Will. Yes, that was my business at Sir John's this morning.

Mrs. Will. And you imagine this wise measure will turn out for the best I suppose?

Will. I do really—

Mrs. Will. What? You think it for the best to let your poor family continue always in obscurity;—and look upon it as a great unhappiness, whenever they have the least chance of rising in the world?

Will. And you think I have done a mighty foolish thing, in preserving the peace as well as the honour of my poor family, from the greatest of all misfortunes?

O

Mrs.

Mrs. Will. From the greatest of all misfortunes! did any body ever hear the like?—Why I tell you Captain Dormer is in love, passionately in love with your daughter.

Will. So much the worse—

Mrs. Will. So much the worse! this is the only thing, in which you ever forgot your all for the best principle.—So much the worse! so much the better I tell you;—and in all likelihood he might have married her, if your ridiculous fear of being happy, had not put Sir John upon his guard, to prevent so desirable a circumstance.

Will. What, Madam, wou'd you have me trepan the only son of my benefactor, into a marriage with my daughter, and at a time too when I know him engaged to a lady of Miss Montagu's family and fortune.—O, Mrs. Willoughby, I am ashamed of these arguments; and if there is no way to be rich, without being despicable, let us look upon poverty as the most eligible of all situations.

Mrs. Will. Don't tell me of Miss Montagu's family, Mr. Willoughby, your daughter is not her inferior in that respect;—besides, a woman of beauty, educated as I have educated Cornelia, even if she has not altogether so much money, has merit enough to deserve the first man in the kingdom.—I am sure if I was a single woman again—

Will. You have been a single woman, Madam, and are now married to a fellow old enough for your father.

Mrs. Will. I don't deserve to be reproach'd by you, Mr. Willoughby;—You are, at least, a gainer by my pity.

Will. I think so, my dear—I think all for the best.

Mrs. Will. What all for the best; my marrying a man as old as my father?—Have a little gratitude, Mr. Willoughby.

Will. Well, well, my dear,—'tis foolish for a man and wife to quarrel, because they must make it up again.—However, we were here talking of Captain Dormer,—and what is our girl's beauty and education to the purpose?

Mrs. Will. Very much to the purpose.—They shew there would have been no impropriety in suffering Captain Dormer to marry Cornelia; and they shew that you behaved very absurdly in striving to prevent the advancement of your own daughter.

Will.

Will. Madam, Madam, young women are apt enough to err of themselves, but a father has indeed a great deal to answer for, who exposes his daughter to unnecessary temptations—Captain Dormer has been already too successful in some families of our acquaintance; and if, while we are contriving to trap him into a marriage with Cornelia, he should find it possible to rob her of her honour, we shall be very properly punished for the baseness of our designs.

Mrs. Will. And do you think that possible, after the share I have had in her education?—tho' I am but her mother-in-law—

Will. My good wife, it is by supposing our own children wiser than the children of other people, that so many are constantly ruined.—If we are desirous therefore, of preserving them unsullied, we should always keep them out of danger;—but our ridiculous partiality constantly paints them in the most flattering colours of perfection, and we never suppose them capable of committing the smallest mistake, till they are totally undone.

Mrs. Will. Well, it is in vain to talk with you;—But remember I say, you will always be the enemy of your own family.

Will. I shall always endeavour, Madam, to act as becomes a father, —but I shall also strive to act as becomes an honest man,—and therefore Captain Dormer shall have no more interviews with my daughter.

Mrs. Will. No!—

Will. No.—My avarice shall neither lead me to injure the happiness of my friend's family, nor shall my weakness betray the honour of my own.—Every thing will, I dare say, turn out for the best; tho' if the worst shou'd happen, I shall still find a consolation in having taken every justifiable method to prevent it. [Exit.

Enter Miss WILLOUGHBY.

Miss Will. O, Madam, I have heard all:—what will become of me?

Mrs. Will. Ah, my poor dear child, was there ever so preposterous a fool as your father!

Miss Will. Dear Madam, say something to comfort me.—You have kindly made yourself the confidant of my sentiments for Captain Dormer, and I must be the most miserable creature in the world, if my father is inflexibly determined to drive him from the house.

Mrs. Will. I can say nothing to you, Cornelia, but what must add to your regret:—there is no hope of any favourable turn in the affairs of our family:—day after day produces fresh disappointments; and instead of having any agreeable prospect to cheer us as we go on, the view becomes more and more clouded with misfortunes.—No, there's no enduring life upon these terms;—no, there's no possibility of enduring it.

Miss Will. O that I had never seen Captain Dormer,—or that he had been less amiable!—

Mrs. Will. Ah, my dear child, I know but too well how to pity your distress:—I have been in love myself; strangely as he now neglects my advice, I was once very desperately in love with your father:—He was the first man that ever said a tender thing to me;—and Mexico, if he was dead to-morrow, would not purchase a single glance of regard for another, nor the mines of Peru obtain a smile of approbation.

Miss Will. Well, Madam, it is happy for me that you have yourself been susceptible of the softer impressions, since that susceptibility has induced you to assist me during my acquaintance with Captain Dormer.

Mrs. Will. It is happy for you, Cornelia; and it shall be happy for you.—My tenderness is more than the tenderness of a step-mother,—and there is nothing I admire so much as constancy in love.—My thoughts, therefore, have not been idle on this affair, and I believe you will allow my understanding to be tolerable.

Miss Will. The whole world concurs in an opinion of your goodness, Madam, but few entertain a higher idea of it than Captain Dormer.

Mrs. Will. The Captain, my dear, is a man of taste and discernment.

Miss Will. And yet I must give him up for ever.

Mrs. Will. 'Tis your own fault!—why won't you take my advice, and make him yours securely?—There is but one way——

Miss Will. O, Madam, you know my abhorrence of an elopement—I have often told you——

Mrs. Will. Yes, and I have often told you,—that your father's forgiveness may be easily obtained;—but that Dormer once married to that Harriot Montagu, is lost for ever.—Do you imagine, child, I wou'd advise you to an impropriety?

Miss

Miss Will. But how can I betray the dignity of my sex, in proposing so bold a measure to the Captain?

Mrs. Will. To be sure it's very bold in a woman who has given away her heart, to make an honourable offer of her hand to a lover.—However, stay child—let poor Dormer be forced into this marriage with Miss Montagu—Let him be torn irrecoverably from you,—and let your obstinacy, like your father's, continually counteract the happiness of your family; were you once Mrs. Dormer, very handsome things might be done for Mr. Willoughby.

Miss Will. O, Madam, don't attack me in so tender a point!

Mrs. Will. Come up stairs, child;—suspecting your father's business to Sir John Dormer's this morning, and dreading the consequence, I have pack'd up all your things ready for an expedition to Scotland:—You must determine, therefore, instantly;—and if you determine to have Dormer, you must act instantly too.

Miss Will. What will become of me!

Mrs. Will. I don't know what will become of you, if you don't take my advice;—and I am sure, on the present occasion, I give you advice that would be very agreeable to half the young ladies within the bills of mortality. [Exit.

The Scene changes to a room at Sir JOHN DORMER'S.

Miss DORMER and Sir GEORGE discovered.

Sir George. Nay, my dear Miss Dormer, there is no bearing so unjust an insensibility to the power of your own attractions.

Miss Dor. Indeed, Sir George, you over-rate my little merits exceedingly;—and probably the greatest I can boast, is my consciousness of their being contracted within a very limited circle.

Sir George. Well, Madam, the very modesty which induces you to decline every pretension to the admiration of the world, is but a fresh proof how greatly you deserve it.

Miss Dor. You have much politeness, Sir George, but politeness is your peculiar characteristic.

Sir George. At least, Madam, I have much sincerity;—and if Sir John's mediation in my favour, together with as fervent an attachment

as ever warm'd the bosom can obtain a look of approbation from Miss Dormer, she may rest satisfied that the business of my life will be an unremitting solicitude for the advancement of her happiness.

Miss Dor. I am infinitely honour'd by this declaration,—and I believe there are not many ladies——

Sir George. Why, Madam, if the vanity may be excused, I flatter myself there are not many ladies who wou'd highly disapprove my addresses.—I have more than once resisted some flattering overtures, and from very fine women too;—but my heart was reserved for Miss Dormer, and she will make me the happiest man existing, by kindly condescending to accept it.

Miss Dor. I am very sensible how just a value shou'd be placed upon such an affection as yours, Sir George, and it gives me no little——

Sir George. [*aside.*] So the Captain imagined I shou'd not succeed with her.

Miss Dor. You will pardon my confusion, Sir George,—but the declaration which I am going to make——

Sir George. Will demand my everlasting gratitude, Madam.

Miss Dor. I shall be very happy to find you really of this opinion.

Sir George. I must be eternally of this opinion; condescension and benignity, Madam, are animating every feature of that beautiful face, and I am satisfied you will be prevailed upon, not utterly to disregard the heart that so passionately solicits your acceptance.

Miss Dor. Indeed, Sir George, I must own you are possess'd of extraordinary merit.

Sir George. This goodness is too much, Madam.

Miss Dor. Your understanding is enlarged.

Sir George. Dear Miss Dormer!

Miss Dor. Your person is unexceptionable.

Sir George. You distress me, Madam, by this excessive generosity.

Miss Dor. Your manners are amiable.

Sir George. I want words to thank you, Madam.

Miss Dor. And your humanity is unbounded.

Sir George. What I am, Madam, take me:—I am yours and only yours; nor shou'd the united graces, if prostrate at my feet and soliciting for pity, rival you a moment in my affection.—No, Miss Dormer,
your

your happiness will ever be the first object of my attention, and I shall no longer wish to exist, than while I am studious to promote it.

Miss Dor. Sir George, I fear you misunderstand me,—and yet it is in your power to make me very happy.

Sir George. How can I misunderstand you, my dearest creature, if it is in my power to make you happy.

Miss Dor. 'Tis in your power indeed, Sir George.

Sir George. Bewitching loveliness, how you transport me.

Miss Dor. But if you wou'd wish to see me happy,—you must withdraw your addresses.

Sir George. Miss Dormer!

Miss Dor. It is impossible for me ever to return your affection.

Sir George. Miss Dormer!

Miss Dor. And I shall be miserable beyond belief, by a continuance of your solicitation.

Sir George. Miss Dormer!

Miss Dor. O, Sir George, to the greatness of your humanity let me appeal; against the prepossession of your heart.—You see before you a distressed young creature, whose affection is already engaged;—and who, though she thinks herself highly honour'd by your sentiments, is wholly unable to return them.

Sir George. I am extremely sorry, Madam,—to have been—I say, Madam—that—really I am so exceedingly disconcerted, that I don't know what to say.—

Miss Dor. O, Sir George, you have no occasion for apologies, tho' I have unhappily too much;—but I know the nicety of your honour, and I depend upon it with security.—Let me then entreat an additional act of goodness at your hands, which is absolutely necessary, as well for my peace, as for my father's:—this is to contrive such a method of withdrawing your addresses, as will not expose me to his displeasure.—Let the discontinuance of them appear, not to be the result of my request, but the consequence of your own determination; he is a zealous advocate for you, and I shou'd incur his severest resentment, if he was to be acquainted with the real impediment to the match.—You are distressed, Sir George, and I am sinking with confusion;—I shall therefore only add that I trust with you more than life, and that I conjure

you to compassionate my situation.—By this conduct you will engage my eternal esteem, and merit that happiness with a much more deserving woman, which it is impossible for you ever to enjoy with me. [Exit.]

Sir George. What is all this!—a dream!—No, 'tis no dream, and I feel myself awake but too sensibly.—What then, am I rejected, despised, where I supposed myself certain of success and approbation?—This is too much;—neither my pride nor my tenderness can support the indignity,—and I shall—what shall I do? Shall I meanly betray the poor girl who has generously thrown herself upon my humanity, and convince the world by such a conduct, that she was right in refusing me:—No, damn it—I scorn a littleness of that nature, and I must shew myself worthy of her affection, tho' her unfortunate pre-engagement wou'd not suffer me to obtain it. But how, in the name of perplexity, shall I manage the matter?—A refusal on my side necessarily incurs the general resentment of the family, and the censure of the world into the bargain;—so that in all probability I shall not only have the honour of risking my life, but my reputation, and this for the happiness of giving a woman I admire to the arms of my rival.—Really the prospect is a very comfortable one. [Exit.]

Enter Miss MONTAGU and Miss DORMER.

Miss Mont. Upon my word, Caroline, you have acted a very heroic part;—but this unaccountable love is able to carry the most timid of the romantic ladies thro' the greatest difficulties.—Now, had I been in your situation, I cou'd no more have asked the man to take my fault upon himself, than I cou'd have made downright love to him.

Miss Dor. Ah, Harriot, you little know to what extremities a strong prepossession is capable of driving a woman, even where there is the most evident impossibility of ever obtaining the object of her inclinations.

Miss Mont. O, my dear, I see very plainly that it is capable of driving a woman to very great extremities.

Miss Dor. Well, I am convinced that if any thing was to prevent your marriage with my brother, you wou'd, notwithstanding this seeming insensibility, look upon the rest of his sex with the utmost aversion.

Miss

Miss Mont. I wonder, Caroline, after my repeated declarations of indifference with regard to your brother, that you can imagine I consider him with the smallest partiality.—There was indeed a time when I might have been prevailed upon to endure the creature,—but his negligence quickly alarmed my pride, and prevented me from squandering a single sentiment of tenderness, upon a man who seem'd so little inclined to deserve it.

Miss Dor. Well, my dear, I am in hopes that you will have but little reason to blame his negligence for the future,—because I know he intends this very day to solicit your approbation.

Miss Mont. O he does me infinite honour, and I suppose you imagine he is entitled to one of my best curtsies for so extraordinary an instance of his condescension;—but, Caroline, I am not altogether so critically situated as to be glad of a husband at any rate,—nor have I such a meanness of disposition as to favour any addresses which are made to me with a visible reluctance.

Miss Dor. A visible reluctance, my dear?—

Miss Mont. Yes, Caroline, a visible reluctance.—'Tis true, indeed, there are a good many kind-hearted creatures, who can stoop to flatter a fellow's vanity, even while he treats them with contempt;—but I am made of different materials, my dear,—I love to mortify the presumption of those confident puppies, who ask my hand with as much familiarity as if they ask'd a pinch of snuff, and seem to say, “So child, I want to make you the upper servant of my family.”

Miss Dor. You are a whimsical creature, Harriot,—but how can you contrive to invalidate the contract between my brother and you, if you are even serious in your determination?

Miss Mont. If I can guess right, your brother will himself find a very expeditious method of breaking it.—However, if he shou'd not, I am in no great hurry for a tyrant, and my Strephon's impudent brow shall be pretty well loaded with wrinkles, before he finds me in the humour of saying, “Whenever you please, good Sir,—and I am very much obliged to you.”

Miss Dor. Well, well, my brother must solicit for himself, and I am sure, notwithstanding this pretended want of feeling, you are no way destitute of good-nature and sensibility.

Miss Mont. Good-nature and sensibility, Caroline;—ay, 'tis this good-nature and sensibility that makes the men so intolerably vain, and renders us so frequently contemptible.—If a fellow treats us with ever so much insolence, he has only to burst into a passionate rant, and tell a gross lie with a prodigious agitation;—in proportion as he whines, we become softened; till at last, bursting into tears, we bid the sweet creature rise,—tell him that our fortune is entirely at his service, and beg that he will immediately assume the power of making us completely miserable.)

Miss Dor. What a picture!

Miss Mont. While he, scarcely able to stifle his laughter, retires to divert his dissolute companions with our weakness, and breaking into a yawn of insolent affectation, cries, "Poor fool, she's doatingly fond of me."—However, Caroline, to convince you at once with regard to my sentiments for your brother—

Miss Dor. Well!

Miss Mont. Let me tell you now, you have determined against Sir George, that this very coxcomb as you call him, this Narcissus, who can love nothing but himself, according to your account—

Miss Dor. Astonishment!

Miss Mont. Is the only man I shall ever think of seriously—There, wonder,—be amaz'd that I don't see with your eyes,—and despise my want of taste;—I'm a mad girl, you know, and possibly like Sir George for his peculiarities,—but still foibles are less culpable than faults, Caroline, and the vanities even of a coxcomb are more easily cured than the vices of a libertine.

Enter a Footman.

Foot. Mr. Villars, ladies, sends his compliments, and is ready, if you are disengaged, to play over the new air which you commended last night at the opera.

Miss Dor. O we'll wait upon him instantly. *[Exit Footman.]*

Miss Mont. *[ludicrously]* O yes, we'll wait upon him instantly.

Miss Dor. How can you be so provoking, Harriot?

Miss Mont. What provoking to wait upon your Corydon instantly?—Come, my sweet shepherdess, let me shew it to the parlour. *[Exeunt.]*

The

The Scene changes to WILLOUGHBY'S.

Enter Mrs. WILLOUGHBY.

Mrs. Will. Mr. Willoughby is return'd I find, and has got the letter Cornelia left for him.—Well, by this time she's with her husband that is to be, and will, I suppose, be speedily on her journey.—The Captain can't recede now; and let his father be pleased or displeased, he is still heir to his title and fortune.—What a difficulty I had to shew her the necessity,—nay the propriety of this measure;—fond as she is of Dormer, it was hardly possible to engage her in it, and she seem'd at one time more determin'd to give him up for ever, than betray the dignity of the female character.—Dignity indeed!—I think I know what belongs to female dignity, as well as most people;—these very young girls, however, are strange creatures;—their nicety is not in the least wounded when they tell a man they love him.—But O 'tis a deviation from dignity, to own they wish him for a husband.—Here comes Mr. Willoughby;—he mustn't know my share in this transaction, till he finds himself happy in the good consequences; and owns there is at least one sensible head in the family.

Enter WILLOUGHBY. [Speaking to a servant behind.]

Will. Let a coach be call'd directly,—she must certainly be gone off to this libertine Dormer.

Mrs. Will. Well, has your elevated notions done you any service, or has all turn'd out for the best now?

Will. Madam, Madam, don't distract me,—don't distract me,—I am sufficiently miserable without these unnecessary reproaches.

Mrs. Will. O you are! I am heartily glad of it—

Will. Yet something whispers at my heart, that all will still turn out for the best—

Mrs. Will. Indeed!

Will. Yes,—the dispensations of providence are always founded on justice;—and none are ever sufferers in the end, but those who have merited the utmost severity from its hands.

Mrs. Will. Fine philosophy truly;—and I suppose you wou'd have thought it for the best if you had lost me, as well as your daughter?

Will. [ironically] I wou'd have tried at least, Madam, to be as easy as possible under so great a misfortune.

Mrs. Will. You wou'd, you barbarous man,——but you are miserable enough without such a circumstance, and that's some comfort to me.—Your obstinacy has made your only child desperate, and you have thought it better to run the hazard of her ruin, than to establish her happiness on a certain foundation.

Will. I tell you, Madam, any distress is preferable to the perpetration of a crime; and there was no way of acting upon your principles, without the blackest ingratitude to the common benefactor of my family.—I feel for the indiscretion of this unhappy girl, with the severest poignancy, but I rejoice that my partiality for her led the father into no action that could impeach the probity of the man.

Mrs. Will. Mighty fine.

Will. This, Madam, is a consolation, a great consolation in this hour of affliction; and let me tell you that in the severest trials, the truly honest feel a satisfaction, which is never experienced in the most flattering moments of a guilty prosperity.

Mrs. Will. Well, well, follow your own course, and answer for the consequences.—Had my advice been taken—but who indeed takes sensible advice now-a-days?—you never took my advice in your life, and you see what the effect has proved to your unfortunate family.

Will. A truce with your wisdom, Madam, I beseech you; for if it only teaches you to be worthless, it wou'd be happy for you to be the greatest idiot in the kingdom:—but I have no time to waste in words, every possible measure must be taken for the recovery of this infatuated girl.—

Mrs. Will. And suppose you shou'd not be able to recover this infatuated girl, as you call her,—what medicine will your philosophy in that case administer, for so great a misfortune.

Will. The best of all medicines,—the consciousness of having never deserved it. [Exit.

Mrs. Will. Why, you ill-bred brute, won't you take me along with you?—I must go with him to see that every thing is conducted with propriety. [Exit.

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

†

ACT

A C T III.

S C E N E, *the Park.*VILLARS *alone.*

Villars. INTO how very hopeless a situation has my fortune at last plunged me, and how unluckily has the very accident which I consider'd as the most happy circumstance of my life, turn'd out a source of disappointment and distress!—Here, while I was rejoicing on being entertained by Sir John Dormer, was it possible for me to suppose that his amiable daughter wou'd have made so absolute a conquest of my heart?—But on the other hand, was it possible to see so much sweetness, affability, and merit, without the warmest admiration?—Yet to what purpose do I continually indulge myself in thinking of Miss Dormer?—My lot in life is as precarious as it is poor, whereas she is entitled to cherish the noblest expectations.——'Tis true, indeed, Captain Dormer has favoured me with his friendship, and I am in hourly hope of an ensigncy by his means—And will an ensigncy—No—I'll lock the secret eternally in my bosom, and since I cannot raise myself up to the importance of her prospects, she shall never be reduced to the penury of mine.

Enter DORMER.

Dor. All alive and merry, my dear Villars, I am now in cash enough; but here my boy is the commission I have been soliciting for you.—'Tis just sign'd,—and you must do me the additional favour of accepting this note to buy regimentals.

Villars. You overwhelm me with this generosity—

Dor. Nay, no hesitating,—you shall give me a draft upon the agent for the money, or do any thing your ridiculous nicety requires, so you only condescend to oblige me.

Villars. I am at a loss for words to—

Dor. I am very glad of it, as I don't want to be thanked for an act of common justice; the necessities of the worthy have a constant claim upon

upon the superfluities of the rich, and we in reality only pay a debt, where the world imagines we confer an obligation.

Villars. This way of thinking is so noble, that——

Dor. Poh,—poh,—poh man, let's have none of these elaborate acknowledgements, especially at this time—when I have news for you; such news,—wou'd you believe it, Miss Willoughby has actually left her father, and is now at my private lodgings in Pall-mall?

Villars. You astonish me!

Dor. Read this letter, and it will inform you in every thing.

Villars [*reads.*] “My dearest Dormer, my unrelenting father has this morning commanded me, never to receive a visit from you more—

Dor. There's a touch of the pathetic, Villars.—My unrelenting father has this morning commanded me, never to receive a visit from you more. [*ludicrously.*]

Villars. “But there's no possibility of existing without my Dormer—

Dor. But there's no possibility of existing without my Dormer.

Villars. “I have, therefore, sent some clothes, and a few ornaments, to the house in Pall-mall, where I have occasionally met him, and shall follow them immediately myself—

Dor. And shall follow them immediately myself.—Ay, there she drops the heroic, and sensibly proceeds to business.

Villars. “If my Dormer's passion is as sincere and as honourable as I think it, he will take instant measures for carrying me to Scotland—

Dor. No—Scotland is too far to the North, Villars—too far to the North—but mind what follows.

Villars. “And put it out of the power of the most malignant destiny—

Dor. There she's in heroics again, Villars.

Villars. “To rob him of his Cornelia Willoughby.”

Dor. To rob him of his Cornelia Willoughby.—O you must speak that with all the emphasis of tragedy-tenderness, man:—your voice must be broken,—your bosom must be thump'd,—your eyes must be fix'd.—Zounds, it will never do without a deal of the passionate.

Villars. How can you turn a woman into ridicule, whose partiality for yourself is the only cause of her indiscretion?

Dor. And how can you suppose that her partiality for me should render me blind to the impropriety of her conduct?—I can see when a woman plays the fool with myself, as soon as when she plays it with other people.

Villars. Well, but what do you intend to do, you see her elopement is upon an absolute supposition of your intending to marry her?

Dor. I don't know that, nor do I see how I am bound to take more care of a lady's honour, than she chooses to take herself.—But even admitting the force of your supposition, what can I do?—It is not in my power to marry her, she knows herself it is not in my power, and I should cut a very ridiculous figure in the eye of the world, if, after a fine girl threw herself voluntarily into my arms, with a perfect knowledge of my situation, I was to read her a lecture of morality with a prim, puritanical phyz, and cry, "You shan't stay with me, Miss, you must go home and be dutiful to your papa."

Villars. My dear Captain, a fond woman always judges of her lover by herself; and Miss Willoughby imagines, because she is ready to run any risk for your sake, that you will as readily run any hazard for her's—she therefore trusts you—

Dor. Zounds, Villars, how preposterously you argue;—doesn't every woman who trusts entirely to the discretion of a lover,—trust a robber with her purse, and an enemy with her reputation? A woman of real principle will never put it into a man's power to be perfidious, and I should not care to trust any of these eloping damsels with my honour, who are such miserable guardians of their own.

Villars. You are a very extraordinary man indeed, to think meanly of a woman, for giving you the greatest proof which she can possibly shew of her affection.

Dor. I must think meanly of any woman, who gives me an improper proof of her affection, though I may be inclined to take an advantage of it.

Villars. Indeed!

Dor. O, Villars! if the women did but know how we doat upon them for keeping us at a sensible distance, and how we despise them where they are forwardly fond, their very pride would serve them in the

the room of reason, and they would learn to be prudent even from the greatness of their vanity.

Villars. So then you think Miss Willoughby fair game, now she has—

Dor. Undoubtedly;—formerly, indeed, I had some scruples on her father's account,—but now she has gone this length, there is no resisting the temptation.—As I told you before, Villars, she knows I can't marry her, she knows I am already engaged,—and what the devil do you think she wants with me—hey?

Villars. Why but—

Dor. Why but,—why but what? Only consider, man, what a mind a woman must have, who can plunge her whole family in wretchedness for any fellow's sake; honour, believe me, Villars, never took root in a bosom which is dead to the feelings of nature; nor are those in the least to be pitied, who are willingly destroy'd.

Villars. Well, well, I stay still—

Dor. But well, well—I hav'n't time to hear what you wou'd say,—for I want you to go to Pall-mall directly to see that Miss Willoughby is properly accommodated.—I know the moment she is missed I shall be suspected, so I'll go to my father's and be in the way there, to save appearances as much as possible.

Villars. Why hav'n't you been at Pall-mall yourself to receive her?—

Dor. Yes, but I had only time to take a few trifling liberties,—and I am now going to make love, very much against my inclination, to Miss Montagu—My father read me a damn'd severe lecture this morning, and the best way of preventing any suspicion from fastening on me about Miss Willoughby, is to shew every mark of readiness to comply with his inclinations;—but go, my dear boy, about the business, and I'll do as much for you, whene'er a pretty woman brings you into difficulties.

Villars. O, I am much obliged to you.

Dor. The people of the house will admit you directly;—and remember, that a trifling lie or two must choak neither of us, if any body shou'd question us about the little runaway. [Exeunt severally.]

Scene

Scene changes to Sir JOHN DORMER'S.

Enter Sir GEORGE.

Sir George. Why how the plague shall I act in this affair?—or with what face can I possibly tell Sir John that I am desirous of declining an alliance with his family, after I have so repeatedly solicited his influence with Miss Dormer.—I promised to wait till he returned from the Cocoa-tree—I wish he was come back with all my heart—for my present situation is none of the most agreeable.—Upon my word it was a mighty modest request of the young lady, at the very moment she refused me, to desire I would take the whole blame upon myself.—Your women of sentiment, however, have a very extraordinary manner of doing things—O but here comes Sir John, what the devil shall I say to him?

Enter Sir JOHN.

Sir John. Sir George, I give you joy,—joy a thousand times.—I met Caroline as I was coming up stairs, and by her silence as well as blushing, I read her readiness to comply with my wishes, and find her the excellent girl I always imagined her.

Sir George. She is a very excellent young lady indeed, and I am very much obliged to her.

Sir John. You can't now conceive the transport of my heart at her cheerful concurrence, but I hope you will one day experience that a dutiful child is the first of all human felicities.

Sir George. It must be a very great happiness indeed, Sir John.

Sir John. Well, Sir George, our lawyers shall meet this very evening, and every thing shall be settled to our mutual satisfaction.

Sir George. Yes, Sir John, I wish to settle every thing to your satisfaction.

Sir John. There will be no great occasion for expensive preparations.

Sir George. O none in the world, none in the world.

Sir John. I don't see any necessity you have to move out of our present house in Berkeley-square.

Sir George. Nor I neither.

Sir John. You have room enough there.

Sir George. Plenty.

Sir John. Why what's the matter, Sir George, you speak with an air of coldness and embarrassment that surprizes me?

Sir George. Sir John, I am incapable of a duplicity.

Sir John. Well.

Sir George. And notwithstanding my wishes for Miss Dormer are as ardent as she is deserving,—a circumstance has happen'd, which must for ever deny me the blessing of her hand.

Sir John. You astonish me!—but what circumstance—she is ready—

Sir George. Yes, yes, she is very ready, Sir John.

Sir John. Then pray acquaint me with the impediment.

Sir George. My dear Sir John, a point, a very nice point of honour prevents the possibility of my indulging you in this request: you may, however, safely assure yourself that I am now no less worthy of your good opinion, than when you favoured me with the warmest recommendation to Miss Dormer.

Sir John. Mighty well, Sir George, mighty well,—and so you come into my house to solicit my influence in your favour, over the affections of my daughter, obtain her approbation, and then, without producing one cause for a change in your sentiments, affront us both in the grossest manner, by instantly receding from your engagements.

Sir George. You are warm, Sir John.

Sir John. Have I not abundant cause for warmth, when you deny a reason for the affront which, on this occasion, you have offered to my family?—If you know any thing in my daughter's conduct that renders her unworthy of your alliance, pronounce it freely—and I shall myself be the first to approve your rejection of her.—But, Sir George, if you capriciously decline a treaty which you yourself took so much pains to commence, without assigning a sufficient cause for your behaviour; be assured I will have ample satisfaction.—Nor shall the altar itself protect you from the united vengeance of an injured friend and an insulted father.

Sir George. Sir John, I easily conceive the purport of this menace:—but whatever measures you intend to take, let me tell you, I shall one day have your thanks for the conduct which now excites your indignation;

tion; and, let me also tell you, that the very moment in which your hand is raised against my life, will be the moment in which I shall prove myself the truest friend to your family.

Sir John. Away, away, you are all profession and falsehood.—My daughter told me that you were incapable of loving any thing but yourself.

Sir George. I thank her very heartily, Sir.

Sir John. And that the wishes of your heart were entirely centred in the admiration of your own adorable person.

Sir George. O, I am infinitely obliged to her.

Sir John. But insignificant, as she justly represented you——

Sir George. Insignificant!

Sir John. That insignificance shall not be your protection.

Sir George. My protection!—So, I want to be protected!

Sir John. Therefore, unless you wou'd prove yourself as destitute of courage as of honour, meet me at the Cocoa-tree in an hour; we can easily have a private room, and, if you fail, I shall set such a stigma on the coward, as will render him a scorn even to the greatest profligate in the kingdom. [Exit.]

Sir George. So—now I am engaged in a pretty piece of business—and must hazard my life for a woman, who has not only rejected my addresses, but mentioned me with contempt; and danger join'd to insult is my reward, where, in reality, I ought to meet with thanks and approbation—La la la lalla, (*bums a French air.*)—Well, be it as it will, Miss Dormer's secret shall be inviolably preserved.—At hrust through the guts is, to be sure, disagreeable enough; but if fellows every day hazard it in defence of the basest actions, there can be no mighty heroism in running a little risque, to support the cause of honour and generosity. [Exit.]

SCENE, DORMER'S Lodgings in Pall-mall.

Enter Miss WILLOUGHBY.

Miss Will. Where shall I hide my miserable head, or how shall I avoid the stroke of impending destruction?—The man who shou'd have been the guardian, is himself the person that attacks my honour, and the unlimited confidence which I rashly reposed in his affection, is now

made use of to cover me with disgrace!—O that my unhappy sex would learn a little prudence, and be well convinced, when they fly from the imaginary oppression of a father, that they are seeking protection from the most cruel of all enemies, those who mean to sacrifice their peace, and blast their reputation.

Enter Lucy.

Lucy. Madam, there is a gentleman from Captain Dormer come to wait upon you.

Miss Will. What can he want with me?

Lucy. I really can't say, Madam.—But, if you please, I'll send him up, and then you can know his business from himself.

Miss Will. [*Walking about in disorder.*] How am I insulted and exposed! But the woman deserves no respect from others, who does not shew a proper regard for her own character.

Lucy. [*aside.*] Lord! what a mighty fuss we make, though I don't see we are a bit handsomer than other people.—Well, Madam, what shall I say to the gentleman?

Miss Will. Shew the gentleman up.

Lucy. [*pertly.*] Yes, Madam.

[*Exit.*

Miss Will. Whoever he is, he cannot increase my fears, and may possibly bring me some intelligence to mitigate their severity.

Enter VILLARS.

Villars. Madam, your most obedient.—I wait upon you with Captain Dormer's respects, to apologize for his unavoidable absence a few hours, and to hope every thing here is quite to your satisfaction.

Miss Will. As the Captain, Sir, has engaged your good offices on this occasion, I suppose you are acquainted with the history of my indiscretion.

Villars. The Captain, Madam, gave me no particular account of matters, but only sent me as a friend, on whose secrecy he could rely, to apologize for his absence, and to enquire how you approved of this situation.

Miss Will. [*with emotion.*] Sir, I don't approve of this situation at all.

Villars. I shou'd be sorry, Madam, that my presence distressed you.

Miss

Miss Will. 'Tis not your presence, Sir, which distresses me, 'tis the consciousness of my own folly; 'tis the danger to which I have exposed myself.—But, Sir, your appearance is the appearance of humanity; and I think you look with compassion on an unhappy young creature, whom the perfidy of a man too tenderly esteem'd, has devoted to destruction; if you do, Sir, save me—I conjure you, by all you hold most dear, to save me from dishonour.—I have been indiscreet, but not criminal, and the purity of my intention has some claim to pity, though the rashness of my flight may be wholly without excuse.

Villars. Be composed, Madam—Pray be composed—You affect me exceedingly.—And you shall find a protector in me, if you have any just cause to apprehend the least violence from Captain Dormer.

Miss Will. If I have any cause, Sir.—Why, instead of proceeding with me to a place where we might be securely united, am I detained in this unaccountable house?—Why did he here attempt liberties, that must be shocking to the mind of sensibility?—And why at his departure did he give the people here orders to confine me to these apartments?

Villars. You feel too strongly, Madam.

Miss Will. Can I feel too strongly, Sir, where my everlasting peace of mind is destroyed; and where the man, who declared he only existed for my sake, is cruelly industrious to plunge me into infamy?—Unknown in the ways of the world, I cou'd not distinguish between the language of sincerity, and the voice of dissimulation.—By my own integrity I judged of his truth, and cou'd not think that any man wou'd be monster enough, to return a tender partiality for himself, with disgrace and destruction.

Villars. Madam, there is something in your manner—there is something in this generous indignation, that disposes me very warmly to serve you, and if you really desire to leave this house, you shall leave it instantly; the people have directions to obey me in every thing, and I do not think myself obliged to answer Mr. Dormer's expectations, where his demands are evidently contrary to the principles of virtue.

Miss Will. Sir, you charm me with these sentiments.

Villars. Madam, they are sentiments which should regulate the conduct of every man; for he who suffers a bad action to be committed
—when

when he has the power of preventing it, is, in my opinion, as guilty as the actual perpetrator of the crime.

Miss Will. I am eternally indebted to this generosity, Sir.

Villars. Not in the least, Madam.—For, abstracted from my general abhorrence of what is indefensible, I find, I know not how, an irresistible inclination to serve you.—But we lose time.—I'll order a coach directly to the door, and leave you at perfect liberty to follow your own inclinations.

Miss Will. I have a fix'd reliance on your honour, Sir, and only lament that I have nothing but thanks to shew my gratitude for this goodness.

Villars. My dear Madam, your thanks are more than I deserve. What I have done, humanity made my duty; and the most contemptible of mankind, is he who declines the performance of a good action, because he has not an expectation of being rewarded.

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

A C T IV.

S C E N E, Sir JOHN DORMER'S.

Enter DORMER followed by WILLOUGHBY.

Will. CAPTAIN Dormer, don't keep me on the rack, but give me up my daughter.

Dor. Sir, I have repeatedly told you—

Will. Yes, Sir, you have repeatedly told me, that you are wholly unconcern'd in her flight—But this is the only thing in which I cou'd find it any way difficult to believe you.

Dor. Mr. Willoughby, this doubt of my veracity is neither kind nor delicate.

Will. Don't insult me, Captain Dormer, while you are loading me with calamity, or possibly I may forget that you are the son of my benefactor.—

refactor.—However, Sir, I do not come here to menace, but to supplicate.—I do not come here to provoke the warmth of your temper, but to interest the sensibility of your heart.—You see me a distress'd, unfortunate, miserable old man.—The whole happiness of my life is wrapp'd up in the inconsiderate girl you have stolen from my arms—and if she is not instantly returned, my portion will be distraction.—Restore her therefore; I beseech you, and restore her while she is innocent.—The blow is a barbarous one, which is aim'd at the bosom of a friend; and the triumph is despicable, indeed, which is purchased at the expence of humanity.

Dor. [*aside.*] Why, how contemptible a rascal is a libertine!

Will. For pity's sake give me back my child; nor destroy, in your giddy pursuit of pleasure, the eternal peace of a man who wou'd readily risk his life for the advancement of your happiness.—You have generosity, Captain Dormer, and you have understanding—yet you combat the natural benevolence of your heart, and oppose the evident sense of your own conviction: You are cruel, because it is gallant; and you are licentious, because it is fashionable.—But, Sir, let my distress, my anguish, restore you to yourself, and teach you, in some measure, to anticipate the feelings of a father. Early in life an only son was taken from me; and the evening of my days is now to be marked with the pollution of an only daughter.—O! Mr. Dormer, you men of pleasure know not how wide a ruin you spread in the progress of your unwarrantable inclinations.—You do not recollect, that, besides the unhappy victim sacrificed, there is a family to participate in her injuries; a mother, perhaps, to die at her destruction, and a wretch like me to madden at her disgrace.

Dor. I cannot be the rascal I intended. [*aside.*] Sir,—Mr. Willoughby, be satisfied,—Miss Willoughby is safe and well—nor shall I ever entertain a wish to disturb your happiness, or to injure her reputation.

Will. Eternal blessings on you for this generous declaration.—But, if you speak your real sentiments, conduct me instantly to my child.

Dor. With pleasure, Sir—and I have great reason to imagine, that the anxiety she has suffered in consequence of this little indiscretion, will make her additionally worthy of your affection.

Will.

Will. Why, I always said that every thing happens for the best; and that many accidents are really blessings in disguise, which we lament as absolute misfortunes.

Dor. Your philosophy will be justified in the present case, I assure you.

Will. Give me your hand, Captain.—I esteem you more than ever;—But come; I am impatient to see my poor girl.—Her fault was the result of her inexperience; and if we were all to be punished for the errors of indiscretion, what wou'd become of the best of us?

Dor. Justly considered, Sir.

Will. Come along, come along, man: I want to be gone—and my miserable wife, whom I didn't care to bring in, for fear she shou'd be clamorous, waits for me in a coach at the end of the street.

Dor. I attend you, Sir—yet, if half the gay fellows about town were inform'd of the business I am going upon—I fancy they'd laugh at me pretty heartily.

Will. Ah, Captain! a man of sense shou'd despise the ridicule of the profligate, and recollect, that the laughter of a thousand fools is by no means so cutting as the severity of his own detestation. [Exeunt.]

The Scene changes to another Apartment at Sir JOHN DORMER'S.

Enter Miss MONTAGU and Miss WILLOUGHBY.

Miss Will. Thus, my dear Madam, have I given you the whole history of my infatuation; and I have now only to repeat my sincere concern for thinking it possible that Captain Dormer cou'd be insensible of your very great merit, and to intreat the favour of your interposition with my father.

Miss Mont. My dear girl, there is no occasion whatsoever for this generous apology.

Miss Will. Indeed, Madam, there is—I was unpardonably vain in attempting to dispute a heart with you, and I was extremely culpable, in forgetting how much the completion of my own wishes might disturb the peace of a family, to which my father had so many obligations.

Miss Mont. My dear Miss Willoughby, we women are all fools when we are in love, and it is but natural that our own happiness shou'd be
more

more immediately the object of our attention, than the happiness of other people.—But I want to ask you a question about this recreant of ours, to which I beg you will give me an ingenuous answer.

Miss Will. Pray propose your question, Madam.

Miss Mont. Then, my dear, suppose matters cou'd be so brought about, that Sir John wou'd approve the Captain's attachment to you, cou'd you, tell me candidly, forgive the insolent use which he has just made of your generosity?

Miss Will. Dear Miss Montagu, why do you ask me such a question?

Miss Mont. Because I am pretty sure you may still have him, if you think him worth your acceptance.

Miss Will. I really don't understand you.

Miss Mont. You shall understand me then—I never will marry Captain Dormer.

Miss Will. Madam!

Miss Mont. He's not a man to my taste.

Miss Will. No!

Miss Mont. No—he is worse to me, to make use of an affected simile, than prepared chicken gloves, or almond paste.

Miss Will. Indeed!

Miss Mont. Yes—he is more offensive than Naples dew, or Venetian cream, the essence of daffodil, or the Imperial milk of roses.

Miss Will. You can't be serious surely—not like him!

Miss Mont. No, positively, I do not like him.

Miss Will. Why, where can there be so—

Miss Mont. O bravo!

“Is he not more than painting can express,

“Or youthful poets fancy when they love.”

Miss Will. You reprove me very justly, Madam—and I blush to speak of a man with softness, whom I shou'd always consider with indignation.

Miss Mont. Come, come, my dear, the Captain is a very agreeable young fellow after all—But I know he is as indifferent about me as I can possibly be about him, and I shou'd never have a syllable of the tender kind from him—if he was not extremely unwilling to disoblige his father.

Miss Will. Has he yet declared himself, Madam?

Miss Mont. Why, not expressly—but I expect him every moment to open with the usual formality, and if you please, we can not only render the scene a whimsical one, but make him smart very sensibly for the liberties of this morning.

Miss Will. In what manner, pray?

Miss Mont. Why, the moment he comes, you shall retire into this closet—and in the midst of all his professions for me, I shall take an opportunity of mentioning your name with an air of jealous resentment.

Miss Will. Well!

Miss Mont. This, I am sure, will induce him to make violent protestations, that this heavenly face of mine alone is the object of his adoration; and, as the men think it no way dishonourable to tell a trifling fib to a woman, I shall soon have him vowing everlasting fidelity, and swearing,

“The envious moon grows pale and sick with grief,

“That I, her maid, am far more fair than she.”

Miss Will. I conceive the whole design, Madam.

Miss Mont. Well then, when he is in the meridian of all his nonsense—do you steal softly out of the closet and sit in that chair—I’ll take care that he doesn’t see you—If he forswears his passion for you, give him a gentle pull by the sleeve—and, looking him stedfastly in the face, leave all the rest to accident.

Miss Will. I am afraid I shan’t have spirits to go through with it.

Miss Mont. Courage, child; hav’n’t I given you spirits enough in declaring that I’ll never marry him?—I think you said my woman let you in, and that you saw nobody else.

Miss Will. Yes.

Miss Mont. Why then she shall keep your being here, a secret from every body, and I warrant we’ll pay the Captain off pretty handsomely—but why so melancholy?

Miss Will. Why, my dear Miss Montagu, I don’t know, if in justice to you, I shou’d think any more of Dormer—he has so many accomplishments—

Miss Mont. Well, my dear, to make you entirely easy, there is a man in the world who is, in my opinion, much more accomplish’d;—but
not

not a word to any body on this matter for your life—I only mention it to you in confidence, and to shew the probability of your yet being happy with Dormer.

Enter JENNY.

Jenny. Madam, the pens and paper are laid in the next room.

Miss Mont. Very well—go—and Jenny—

Jenny. Madam.

Miss Mont. Don't give the least hint to any of the family that Miss Willoughby is here.

Jenny. By no means, Madam.

[Exit.]

Miss Mont. And now we'll prepare a letter to your father—But come, my dear girl, you must not be so dejected—Your little error is amply atoned for by the generosity of this conduct; and there are some faults which, like happy shades in a fine picture, actually give a forcible effect to the amiable light of our characters.

[Exeunt.]

The Scene changes to the Pall-Mall Apartments.

Enter WILLOUGHBY, Mrs. WILLOUGHBY, DORMER, and LUCY.

Dor. Come in, my dear Sir—come in—don't be alarm'd Miss Willoughby—your father is prepared to overlook every—Why, she isn't here!

Lucy. Pray, Sir, didn't I tell you so?

Mrs. Will. What, isn't she here?

Lucy. No, Madam.

Will. No!

Lucy. Lord bless you, Sir, didn't I tell you so as you came up?

Dor. And where is she gone to?

Lucy. Do you desire I shou'd tell the truth?

Will. Ay, speak the truth child, and fear nothing—But let's take a peep into this room.

[Goes into another room.]

Lucy. Then the truth is—

Mrs. Will. That's a good girl, speak up.

Lucy. The truth is, I don't know where she's gone.

Dor. Death and confusion,—where can she be gone to?

Lucy. That I don't know, as I said before—But she went with your friend—the gentleman you sent here on a message to her.

[Exit.]

Mrs. Will. O, she's gone away with a friend of your's, is she?—for shame, Captain Dormer—you a tender lover—you animated with that exquisite softness which souls of sensibility feel!

Dor. Death, Madam, why will you tease me in this manner—I tell you I have been betray'd.—

Re-enter WILLLOUGHBY.

Will. No, Sir, it is I who am betray'd.—And so a friend of his has carried her off? [To *Mrs. Will.*

Mrs. Will. Yes, and every thing happens for the best now—doesn't it?

Dor. Mr. Willoughby, hear me.

Will. Captain Dormer, after this re-iterated insult, this aggravated cruelty—'tis infamous to talk with you.—However, Sir, old as you think me, and little as you dread my resentment, you shall feel it heavily.—No! injur'd as I am, you shall never receive a stroke from me.—I am too miserable myself by the loss of a child, to stab my best benefactor even in the person of a worthless son.—You are therefore safe.—Safe as the fears of cowardice can wish.—But if you have feelings, to those feelings I consign you.—They will make a scorpion in that bosom to avenge my wrongs.—For know, though bad men may find it possible to elude the justice of a whole universe, they are yet utterly without means of flying from their own recollection.

Dor. Mr. Willoughby, let me only explain the matter.—

Will. Sir, I'll talk to no monsters.

Dor. Dear Mrs. Willoughby, your husband is so impetuous—

Mrs. Will. Don't speak to me, Sir—don't speak to me.—A perfidious lover shall never gain an audience from Mr. Willoughby.—But, my dear, what do you intend doing?

Will. Pray, Madam, don't tease me.

Mrs. Will. Why, you ill-natur'd—but I won't forget the bounds of propriety—especially as you are not madman enough to fight—It would be little for the better if you were killed.

Will. Death, Madam, any thing would be for the better, that set me free from your intolerable impertinence. [Exit.

Mrs. Will. Did the world ever hear such a vulgar fellow—but these husbands have no more breeding!—And here he has gone without giving

giving me his hand.—In a little time I suppose the fair sex will be entirely neglected.—[*Going, returns.*] But, Sir, a word in your ear.—You are a base man.—I would not violate propriety for the world—but you are a base man. Sir John shall know every thing instantly.—’Twas I that urg’d my poor girl to repose that implicit confidence in your honour—and since my advice has lost—my assiduity will do any thing to recover her. [Exit.]

Dor. Why, how just is it that profligacy shou’d be constantly attended with punishment, and how reasonable is it, that those who make no scruple of wounding the happiness of others, shou’d be conspicuously miserable themselves.—How shall I look my father in the face, when this matter comes to be known; or how shall I see this unhappy old man, whom I have so infamously wrong’d.—What a poor, what a paltry, what a merciless passion, is this passion of gallantry; yet it reflects no scandal whatever upon its followers, though it begins in the most despicable falsehood, and terminates in the most irreparable destruction.—A man of gallantry, is the only wretch who can despise the sense of shame, and stifle the feelings of gratitude without reproach; take him into your house, he attempts the sanctity of your bed;—load him with obligations, and he betrays the purity of your daughter.—The sensible world, however, allows him to be a man of honour all the time, and he stabs you, with impunity, to the heart, for presuming to complain of your wrongs.—Why did not I see the blackness of this character a little earlier.—But—no—My cursed pride wou’d resist the arguments of my conviction.—And for a pitiful triumph over an unsuspecting innocent, I must basely divest myself both of reason and humanity. Where can this girl be fled to?—Villars, I am sure, is incapable of betraying me, and as she came here willingly, she was prepared for the consequences of course.

Enter VILLARS.

My dear Villars, you are come most luckily here; Miss Willoughby is gone off, and the people of the house have the impudence to say, by your means.

Villars. Well, and they say very justly.

Dor. How’s this?

Villars. I suffer'd her to escape—I assisted in her escape—and am now ready to answer for the consequences.

Dor. Indeed!

Villars. But first, Sir, let me return you the commission, and the note with which you were this morning so kind as to present me.—I do not mean to keep your favours while I counteract your views, and I scorn to profit by the generosity of any man, unless upon terms that merit my approbation.

Dor. Death and the Devil, Sir, how dare you use me in this manner: how dare you betray my confidence so scandalously; draw, and give me instant satisfaction.

Villars. I came here on purpose to give you satisfaction—but before I draw, suffer me to ask a question or two in my turn.—And now, Sir, how dare you suppose, that I was to be made the instrument of your licentiousness; how dare you suppose that I wou'd be the pander to your vices, and join with you in a barbarous contrivance of destroying a young creature, whose inexperience was her only crime?

Dor. Here's a fellow!

Villars. But I suppose you insulted me on account of my situation, and imagined, because I was poor that I was consequently worthless; however, Sir, be now undeceived, and, in the midst of your affluence and my poverty, know, that I am your superior, for the best of all reasons, because I disdain to commit a despicable action.

Dor. I am astonish'd at the very impudence of his rectitude, and can't say a syllable to him.

Villars. When I came here, instead of a willing victim to your wishes, I found Miss Willoughby in the utmost affliction, conscious of her indiscretion in flying from her father, and shuddering with apprehension of violence from you.—She soon inform'd me of her fears, and lamented, in the most pathetic terms, how greatly she had been deceived in the object of her affection.—She imagined an honourable union with you wou'd have been the consequence of her flight; and little supposed that the man she loved, wou'd make use of her partiality for himself, to cover her with disgrace.—Thus disappointed, thus betrayed, she asked for my protection, she received it—and now, Sir, [*drawing*] take your revenge.

Dor.

Dor. Yes, Sir, I will take my revenge, but it shall be thus: [*throwing down his sword, and shaking Villars by the hand*] Thus, my dear Villars, let me thank you for the superiority of your principles; I am myself awakened to a sense of true honour, and cannot, now I know the real motive of your conduct, resent, as an injury, what I must look upon with the highest admiration.

Villars. How agreeably you surprize me, Sir.

Dor. Dear Villars, take these trifles again, or I shall not think you forgive me. [*Villars accepts the commission, &c.*] But, my poor girl—and so she has principle after all—what a rascal have I been!—Do tell me where she's gone.

Villars. Indeed I cannot.—I only saw her into a coach; but I suppose she is return'd to her father.

Dor. No—she is not—her father is but just gone—he came to me, as I suspected, on the very first knowledge of her flight; and shew'd so deep a distress, that I cou'dn't persevere in my design of seeming wholly ignorant of her elopement.

Villars. Well!

Dor. I therefore brought him here to give her back; and the poor man was actually in extasies—but when he found she was gone, he lost all patience; and, naturally enough imagining that she was carry'd off by my contrivance, treated me with a freedom, which nothing but the conviction of my guilt cou'd enable me to endure, even from the father of Miss Willoughby.

Villars. Upon my word, this affair has drawn you into a very disagreeable situation.

Dor. Into a disagreeable situation!—into a damn'd one—and I shall hate the word Gallantry as long as I live.—My friend's daughter too!—shame—shame—shame—Zounds! Villars, a man ought to be good even from policy, if he is not so from inclination.—Damn it; you don't know half the perplexities of my situation.

Villars. No!

Dor. No.—Distracted as I am, I must assume a calm unruffled face immediately, before Miss Montagu.

Villars. What, are you going to Miss Montagu directly?

Dor. Yes, instantly.—I have myself requested a tête-à-tête, to make a formal declaration—and truly I am in a pretty frame of mind to make love to a woman of her vivacity.

Villars. Why, indeed, your hands are pretty full of business.

Dor. Yes, yes, I have business enough; and my father will know every thing presently.—But I must be a man of gallantry, and be damn'd to me!—Villars, you now see, that the greatest of all idiots is he who makes himself despicable, to destroy his own happiness. [*Exeunt.*]

Scene changes to a Room at the Cocoa-tree.

Sir GEORGE alone.

Sir George. Well, here I am; and a pleasant affair I have to go through!—I wish it was well over:—For, though there may be a great deal of bravery in venturing one's life, I can't say that there is a great deal of satisfaction.

Enter a Waiter.

Waiter. Sir John Dormer, Sir.

Sir George. Shew Sir John up.—Now for it.

The Waiter returns, introducing Sir JOHN, and exit.

Sir George. Sir John, your most obedient.

Sir John. Well, Sir George; I see you are a man of courage at least; and so far I find you worth my resentment.

Sir George. No reproaches now, my dear Sir John: For the greatest enemies make a point of being perfectly well bred, when they are going to cut one another's throats.

Sir John. Then, Sir George, that I may answer your ideas of politeness, let me beg of you to draw instantly.

Sir George. There is no refusing a request which is made with so much civility; and now, Sir, I am all obedience to your commands.

Sir John. And now to punish the infamous insult which has been offer'd to my family.

Miss

Miss DORMER rushes from the door at the head of the stage, and, falling upon her knees, exclaims,

Then punish it here, Sir; for I alone am culpable.

Sir John. How's this!

Miss Dor. O Sir, hear me with pity: For the dread of your resentment is insupportable.

Sir George. A lady upon her knees! Pray, Madam, suffer me to raise you up.

Miss Dor. No, Sir George; this attitude best becomes a creature like me, who has not only exposed her benefactor to danger, but even raised a sword against the life of her father.

Sir John. Rise, Caroline.—But tell me, in the name of wonder, what am I to understand by this?

Miss Dor. My indiscretion, Sir—my disobedience:—For, though you have always treated me with the most unbounded indulgence, I have ungratefully disappointed your views, and placed my affection upon an object that can never be entitled to your approbation.

Sir George. So my throat seems to be pretty safe this time.

Sir John. Go on.

Miss Dor. Actuated by my regard for this object, though utterly despairing to obtain him, I trusted Sir George with the secret, in the fulness of my heart; and begg'd he would not only withdraw his addresses, but withdraw them in such a manner, as might save me even from the suspicion of any unwillingness to pay an implicit obedience to your commands.

Sir John. This is very extraordinary.

Sir George. Yes, but it's very true for all that.

Miss Dor. Sir George saw my distress, and kindly complied with my request; and hadn't I accidentally overheard the altercation which produced this meeting, the best of fathers or the noblest of men [*pointing to Sir George*] had perhaps fallen a sacrifice to the unhappy prepossession of an inconsiderate daughter.

Sir George. I never knew so sensible a woman in my life.

Miss Dor. Distracted at the extremity to which matters were carried, I knew not how to act—The moment I was capable of resolving, I re-

solved to fly here and wait for your arrival—not coming to any determination till you, Sir, and Sir George, had quitted the house—here I hinted to the people my apprehension of a misunderstanding between you, and desired to be placed in the next room to that which they told me was reserved for your use—the rest is already known—and I am now to intreat Sir George's forgiveness, for the danger to which his unexampled greatness of mind had so nearly exposed him—and to implore your pardon, Sir, for daring to entertain even a hopeless prepossession, when I know it must combat with the favourite object of your inclinations.

Sir George. Come, Sir John—what the devil are you dreaming of—you and I are friends now—and therefore we need not stand altogether upon ceremonies.

Sir John. I am considering, Sir George, whether I ought most to be pleased, or offended with my daughter.

Sir George. Zounds, man, be pleased with her, for it will be most to your own satisfaction.

Sir John. Then, Caroline, let me tell you that I am charm'd with your frankness upon this occasion—though I am sorry it was not shewn a little earlier—Had you ingenuously told me the situation of your heart when I talk'd to you this morning, you wou'd have saved yourself much anxiety, and prevented me from behaving in a manner to Sir George that I must be eternally ashamed of.

Miss Dor. Indeed, Sir, if you knew my motive—

Sir George. Come, come, my dear Miss Dormer—don't let us pain ourselves with the recollection of past anxieties—when we may indulge ourselves with the prospect of future happiness—I have no notion of the wisdom that makes us miserable—and therefore, Sir John must and shall, if he expects me to overlook this cavalier conduct of to-day, do me the favour to consult your inclinations.

Miss Dor. You are too good, Sir George—but—

Sir John. Speak up my dear, and tell us candidly who you have distinguish'd with your approbation—I am not one of the fathers who wish to maintain a despotic authority, nor will I make my daughter wretched, to convince the world that I am master in my family.

Sir George. O fye, Sir John, there are a great many good fathers who never refuse any thing but happiness to their children.

Miss Dor. I am so overwhelm'd with this goodness—it is at present too much for me. As we go home in the coach I shall endeavour to let you know every thing—especially as the object of my choice is—

Sir John. Is he a man of merit, my dear—is he a good man?—he that is worthy in himself, is above the despicable necessity of stealing a reputation from the virtue of his progenitors; the riches of the heart are the noblest of all possessions. *[Exeunt Sir John, and Miss Dormer.]*

Sir George. I am entirely of Sir John's opinion—the riches of the heart are the noblest of all prepossessions, and I don't think that, on the present occasion, I have proved myself the poorest fellow in the kingdom—notwithstanding my recent insignificance. *[Exit.]*

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

A C T V.

S C E N E, Sir JOHN DORMER's House.

Enter Miss MONTAGU and Miss WILLOUGHBY.

Miss Mont. **W**HY, what can keep this hopeful Corydon of ours?

Miss Will. Possibly some other attachment.

Miss Mont. Jealousy, Miss Willoughby—rank jealousy, my dear girl. O that we shou'd be such fools as to bestow a single thought upon these wretched fellows, who are not sensible of the obligation!

Enter JENNY.

Jenny. Madam, Madam, Captain Dormer is coming up. *[Exit.]*

Miss Mont. To your ambush, my dear—and be sure you watch a proper opportunity of annoying the enemy.

Miss Will. *[retiring into a closet.]* O, you shan't have any occasion to question my generalship!

Enter DORMER.

Dor. Miss Montagu, your most obedient.

Miss Mont. Captain Dormer, your most devoted humble servant.

Dor. I am come, my dear Miss Montagu—

Miss Mont. I see you are, my dear Captain Dormer.

Dor. The amiable vivacity of your temper, Madam, has always been an object of my admiration—but I come now to solicit you in regard to a subject—

Miss Mont. Upon which it is criminal, I suppose, to exercise my amiable vivacity.

Dor. I need not inform you, Madam, of the engagement which, so happily for me, subsists between our families—nor need I remind you—

Miss Mont. Why then do you give yourself this trouble, Sir, if the information is so very unnecessary?

Dor. That I may tell you, Madam, I am inexpressibly fortunate in the honour of this interview, and assure the most charming of her sex, that the whole felicity of my life materially depends upon her approbation.

Miss Mont. Upon my word, a very pretty speech, Captain, and very tolerably express'd—but do you know now, that I look upon the whole business of making love to be mighty foolish, and have no notion of a woman's sense, who is to be flattered out of her liberty, by a flimsy compliment to her person.

Dor. This liveliness is charming—but you must not, however, rally me out of my purpose—suffer me, therefore, my dear Miss Montagu, to implore—

Miss Mont. Now positively I must stop you, for there is no bearing the insolence of this humility.

Dor. What insolence—my dear Miss Montagu—Is it insolence thus to fall at your feet—Is it insolence—

Miss Mont. For Heaven's sake, Dormer, don't make a fool of yourself—for I tell you the humblest supplications with which you men can possibly tease the women, are an unaccountable mixture of pride and absurdity.

Dor.!

Dor. There is something so very new in this opinion, Madam, that I should be glad you'd let me know how it is to be supported.

Miss Mont. O 'tis very easily supported, if you only suffer me to put the general purport of all love addresses, from the time of the first pair, down to the present hour, into something like plain English.

Dor. Pray do.

Miss Mont. Why then suppose, that a tender lover, like you, shou'd offer up his adoration at the altar of some terrestrial divinity like myself, let me ask you if this wou'd not be the meaning of his pretty harangue, however he might study to disguise his design with the plausible language of adulation.

Dor. Now for it.

Miss Mont. Don't interrupt me—Madam, your beauty is so exquisite, and your merit is so transcendent, that emperors themselves might justly tremble to approach you, and languish in the deepest despair of being allied to so much perfection.

Dor. Well said.

Miss Mont. Yet, though all hearts are yours, and though you were born to triumph over an admiring world, I desire you will instantly appoint me the master of your fate—my happiness depends upon your being a slave, and I must be eternally wretched, without the power of making you miserable—you must, therefore, promise to know no will but my humour, and no pleasure but my inclination—Your present state of freedom you must exchange for the most mortifying dependence, and throw your whole fortune at my feet, for the honour of managing the domestic concerns of my family. If you—

Dor. What the devil is there any more of it?

Miss Mont. If you behave well, that is, if you put up with every caprice of my temper, and every irregularity of my conduct; if you meanly kiss the hand that strikes at your repose, and treat me with reverence when I offer you the grossest indignities, you shall have an occasional new gown, and sometimes the use of your own chariot—Nay, if you are very good indeed, I may carry my kindness still farther, and use you with nearly as much civility as any of my servants.

Dor. What, hav'n't you done yet?

Miss

Miss Mont. O, I cou'd go on for an hour.—But what do you think of this specimen?—Isn't it a true translation of all the love speeches that have been made since the commencement of the world, and aren't you men a set of very modest creatures, to suppose that an address of this elegant nature is calculated to make an instant conquest of our affections?

Dor. This spirit is bewitching, and increases my admiration, though it treats me with severity.

Miss Mont. Well, notwithstanding the frightful idea which I entertain of matrimony, I am nevertheless half afraid I shall be at last cheated out of my freedom as well as the rest of my sex—but then I must be perfectly convinced of my admirer's sincerity.

Dor. A decent hint that, though I wish it had been spared.—[*aside.*] And can you, my dear Miss Montagu, possibly doubt the sincerity of my professions, and cruelly turn away those irresistible eyes when I vow an everlasting fidelity?—What, still silent, my angel—not a word—not one word to rescue me from destruction—but be it so—If Miss Montagu decrees my fate, I submit it without murmuring, for death itself is infinitely preferable to the idea of offending her. [*going.*] I think I am pretty safe now. [*aside.*]

Miss Mont. Now, who wou'd believe that this fellow cou'd lie with so very grave a countenance? [*aside.*] Why you are in a violent hurry, Captain Dormer.

Dor. O, zounds! she calls me back again, does she? [*aside.*] What, my dear Miss Montagu, do you relent, do you feel the least compassion for the distresses of a heart that adores you?

Miss Mont. Sit down, Captain.—Sit down here—I am a strange, foolish creature—and cannot disguise my sentiments.—But if I thought myself the only object—

Dor. By all my hopes—

Miss Mont. Well, don't swear—I must believe you.—And yet I am strangely apprehensive that in the extensive circle of your acquaintance, you must have form'd some attachments.—The world has been talking—and 'tis no secret that Miss Willoughby has accomplishments.

Miss

Miss Willoughby enters unobserved by DORMER, and sits down.

Dor. Yes, Madam—*Miss Willoughby* has accomplishments, but they are very trifling.

Miss Mont. Then you never entertained any tenderness for her, I suppose.

Dor. For *Miss Willoughby*, Madam—O my dear *Miss Montagu*, you don't think me altogether destitute of understanding!

Miss Mont. Why, you just now own'd that she had accomplishments.

Dor. Yes, I said that she had trifling ones.

Miss Mont. And no more?

Dor. The baby's face is regular enough—and might serve very well for the window of a toy-shop.

Miss Mont. Then I find there is nothing to be apprehended on her account.

Dor. On her account, my angel, you sha'n't lessen the merit of your own attractions so much as to admit the possibility of supposing it.

Miss Will. [*giving him a pull by the sleeve.*] I am very much obliged to you, Sir.

Miss Mont. [*ludicrously.*] Not a word, not one word to rescue me from distraction——

Miss Will. The baby's face is regular enough, and might serve very well for the window of a toy-shop——

Miss Mont. But be it so—If *Miss Montagu* decrees my fate, I submit without murmuring.——

Miss Will. O don't think the gentleman altogether destitute of understanding——

Miss Mont. For death itself is infinitely more preferable to the idea of offending her——There, *Miss Willoughby*, is a man of honour for you——

Miss Will. And are these the men who value themselves so much upon their veracity?

Miss Mont. O my dear, they have veracity to a very prudent degree, for they never tell a falsehood to any body who is capable of calling them to an account.—But come, *Miss Willoughby*, let us leave the gentleman to himself—he has a very pretty subject for a reverie, and

it

it wou'd be cruel to disturb him in his agreeable reflections—Sir, your most obedient—Give it him home, my dear girl—have no mercy on him—*[aside to Miss Willoughby.]*

Miss Will. Sir, your most respectful—

Miss Mont. That's right—Sir, your most obliged—

Miss Will. Your most faithful—

Miss Mont. Bravo!—and most devoted humble servant.

[Exeunt laughing.]

Dor. *[after a long pause of confusion.]* So; I have had a hopeful time on't—my evil genius has been a long arrear in my debt, and now pays me off with a witness.—What a sneaking, what a pitiful puppy do I appear—thus detected, and thus laughed at—But I deserve it all—I wou'dn't see the infamy of practising deceit upon a woman—I must even think myself called upon to betray, because the object was a woman; and laugh at the anguish I gave a worthy heart, because it was lodged in a female breast—Notwithstanding all my mortification, however, I am overjoyed at finding Miss Willoughby safe—I may now perhaps prevent the matter from reaching my father's ears—not that I fear he will discard—but what is infinitely worse, if he knows it, will eternally despise me—How merry the girls were with me—Sir, your most respectful—Sir, your most obliged—Sir, your most faithful—

Enter Sir JOHN.

Sir John. Sir, your most devoted humble servant—

Dor. *[aside.]* O! now I am completely done for—

Sir John. Well, Sir, what can be urged for you now?—Is this the reformation I was to expect—and is this the regard which you entertain for the credit of your family?

Dor. If you will give me leave to clear this matter up, Sir—

Sir John. 'Tis already clear'd up—Mr. Willoughby—Miss Montagu have cleared it up—And now suppose Mr. Willoughby, listening only to the dictates of his rage, and not to the pleadings of his friendship for me, had demanded reparation for his wrongs, how, after robbing him of his daughter, cou'd you come prepared against his life—And how, after destroying a young lady's reputation, cou'd you attempt to embue your hands in the blood of her father?—But, Sir, you are a man
of

of spirit, you are a man of honour, and that spirit, and that honour are to be sufficient pleas for every violence offered to justice, and every outrage committed upon humanity—You have a title to be guilty, because you have the character of being brave, and you may perpetrate the blackest crime with impunity, because you have the diabolical resolution to defend it—

Dor. There is so much propriety in this reproach, Sir—that I feel myself unable to answer it—

Sir John. That sword I gave you, Sir, to be exerted in the cause of honour, not to be drawn in the support of infamy—I gave it to be used in the defence of your country, not to be exercised in the violation of her laws—but why do I talk of honour to him who looks with admiration upon shame, and thinks himself accomplished in proportion as he becomes profligate—why do I reason with a man who glories in the prostitution of his understanding, and imagines he exalts his character as he destroys the peace of society?—Perhaps, in his ideas of bravery, he may be obliged even to raise his arm against my bosom, and perhaps he may punish a reproachful mention of his vices with death, though it comes from the lips of his father.

Dor. Sir, I have been culpable—extremely culpable—but my present intention is to remove Mr. Willoughby's distress—not to defend the injury I offered him—and I can with truth affirm, that the principal part of my misconduct in this affair, originally proceeded from the great veneration which I entertained for that very father, who now thinks me so profligate and unnatural.

Sir John. Mighty well!

Dor. I loved Miss Willoughby, Sir, tenderly loved her, before you enter'd into any engagement about Miss Montagu—But, fearful of disoblighing you, I kept the circumstance of my passion a secret, as I did not suppose you wou'd countenance a union, where there was so material a disparity of situations.

Sir John. And pray, Sir, how dare you suppose that I shou'd be more offended at the performance of a good action, than at the commission of a dishonourable one?—How dare you imagine I shou'd be displeased at your marriage with Miss Willoughby, and that I shou'd not be infinitely more displeased at this scandalous seduction?—But it was

T

your

your regard for me which led you to betray the confidence of your friend, as well as to attempt the innocence of his daughter—Yes, Sir, your regard for me is extremely evident—You knew how much my happiness depended upon your reputable rise in the world, and how warmly I expected you would be a credit to your country, as well as an ornament to your family—Your natural advantages were great, and your education has been liberal—yet, instead of the flattering prospects with which my imagination was once delighted, I have now nothing before me but a gloomy scene of disappointment and regret—Instead of hearing my son's name with joy, and exulting in the growing dignity of his character, I am hourly mortified with some fresh accounts of his licentiousness, and hourly trembling, lest the hand of well-grounded resentment, or the sword of public justice, should cut him off in the perpetration of his crimes—Instead of finding him the support of my age, he incessantly saps the foundation of my life, and instead of kindly nourishing the lamp of my existence with his virtues, he sinks me down into the grave, an equal victim of sorrow and disgrace.

Dor. [*Falling at his father's feet.*] No more, Sir, I beseech you no more—nor suppose me such a monster—My life hitherto has been a scene of folly and dissipation, and I reflect, with the deepest concern, upon the anxiety which the best of fathers has suffered on my account—but if he can be prevailed upon to forgive the past, the future, I will boldly say, shall merit his approbation—for I am now satisfied that nothing can be consistent with the principles of honour, which is any way repugnant to the laws of morality.

Sir John. Rise, and be my son again—there is a candour, there is a generosity in this acknowledgment which engages my confidence, and I still flatter myself with a belief, that you will answer my warmest expectations.

Dor. You are too good, Sir—But the freedom with which I shall communicate the most unfavourable circumstances of this affair, as well as my readiness to fulfil all your commands, shall in some measure prove the certainty of my reformation.

Sir John. Why, Jack, this is speaking like my son—And to let you see that your inclination is the only object of my wishes, Miss Willoughby's hand now waits to crown your return to virtue.

Dor.

Dor. Miss Willoughby's, Sir!

Sir John. Yes,—Miss Montagu, just as I entered, acquainted me with the whimsical distress of your courtship scene, in terms equally consistent with her usual good-nature and vivacity, and on account of your attachment to Miss Willoughby, as well as her own fix'd disinclination to be your's, requested I wou'd not think any longer of the treaty between our families—Finding her determin'd in the solicitation, I wou'd by no means force her wishes—and am now rejoiced at so lucky an opportunity of rewarding, as you yourself could desire, the merit of your present character.

Dor. There is no doing justice to the generosity of your sentiments, Sir—

Sir John. Poh, poh, man, the parent that makes his children happiest always gives them the best fortunes——We'll now join the company cheerfully.—But remember for the future, my dear boy, what every son should constantly have in view, that more than your own happiness and your own honour are trusted to your care, and that you cannot experience a misfortune, nor suffer a disgrace, without sensibly wounding the bosom of your father. [Exeunt.

SCENE, another Room at Sir JOHN DORMER'S.

Enter Sir GEORGE.

Sir George. So then, it seems, I am not quite detestable after all.—It seems there are some women, though I have been rejected, who can still think me amiable—and declare, if ever they change their situation, I must positively be the man.—Villars had the secret from Miss Dormer—and Miss Dormer had the acknowledgment of Miss Montagu's regard for me, from Miss Montagu herself—her refusal of Dormer, moreover, corroborates the intelligence, even if there was any thing very improbable in my having engaged a lady's affection.—Upon my soul I don't see but Harriot is to the full as handsome as Caroline; and then her understanding—Yes, I think 'tis pretty evident that she has the advantage in understanding—Ay, but can I so readily forget Caroline—Can I so quickly remove my addresses, and offer up that heart at the shrine of the one, which has been so recently rejected at the altar of the other

—Why, to be sure, there will be nothing extremely gallant in such an affair—But, at the same time, there will be nothing extremely preposterous—It doesn't follow, because I have been repulsed by one woman, that I should forswear the whole sex; and, in a fit of amorous lunacy, like the knights errants of old, nobly dedicate my life to despair, because I unfortunately lost the original object of my affections—Besides, at the present period, changing hands is all the fashion; and, while it is so meritorious in men of quality to part with their wives, it cannot surely be very criminal to part with our mistresses—Here, by all that's opportune, she comes—what a bewitching girl—O! 'twould be barbarous to let her pine—I'll give her encouragement at once, and then put an end to her anxiety.

Enter Miss MONTAGU.

Miss Mont. O! there's no bearing their loves, and their joys—their tears, and their congratulations—Sir John has join'd the hands of another couple—and Caroline has now Miss Willoughby to keep her in countenance—But pray, Sir George, wasn't poor Villars overjoyed when you told him of Sir John's design of receiving him as a son-in-law.

Sir George. He was, both with gratitude and astonishment—however, I carried him immediately to Sir John; here Miss Dormer was sent for, and without the least hint of her private sentiments, Sir John, who had properly founded the young fellow's inclinations, introduced him as a man whom he found worthy to be his son-in-law, and her husband.

Miss Mont. I pitied her situation most heartily.

Sir George. I pity the situation of every lady in love, Madam.

Miss Mont. I am sure Miss Dormer thinks herself much indebted to your generosity.

Sir George. Perhaps, Madam, I may yet have obligations to the prepossession of Miss Dormer.

Miss Mont. Prepossessions are strong things, Sir George.

Sir George. And, in a lady's bosom, Madam, very troublesome.

Miss Mont. Not where the object is attainable—

Sir George. True, Madam—and he must be a barbarian, who, conscious of a lady's tenderness, possesses the ability without the inclination to return it—I think that hint will give her some consolation. [*aside*]

Miss

Miss Mont. The men, I believe, Sir George, have but few opportunities of exercising such a barbarity—Indications of tenderness seldom first proceed from the ladies.

Sir George. I don't know that, Madam—but was I happy enough to be the object of a lady's esteem—I would sacrifice much to remove her anxiety—This will make her speak or the devil's in't. [*aside.*]

Miss Mont. Kind creature! and so you'd condescend to take pity on her.

Sir George. I would do every thing to make her happy, Madam—why, what the plague must she be in love, and is the courtship to come entirely from my side? [*aside.*]

Miss Mont. Well! you are a whimsical creature, and so I leave you—

Sir George. Stay, Miss Montagu—

Miss Mont. For what?

Sir George. I will be generous and spare her blushes. [*aside.*] I have something very serious to say to you.

Miss Mont. Serious indeed, if one may judge by your gravity.

Sir George. Miss Montagu, I am inexpressibly concerned—I say inexpressibly concerned to see you of late so melancholy.

Miss Mont. To see me of late so melancholy!—Why, Sir George, I never had better spirits.

Sir George. No!

Miss Mont. No—really.

Sir George. I cou'd not imagine it.

Miss Mont. And why so, pray?

Sir George. Why so, Madam? Nay, I have no particular reason—but, Miss Montagu, I should be sorry to see you labour under the smallest uneasiness—I have the highest opinion of your merit, Madam—and—

Miss Mont. Surely Caroline has not—[*aside.*] I shall be always proud of possessing a place in the good opinion of Sir George Hastings.

Sir George. You do possess the principal place in my good opinion, Madam,—and—

The back scene thrown open discovers Sir JOHN, CAPTAIN and Miss DORMER, VILLARS, Mr. Mrs. and Miss WILLOUGHBY.

Sir George. Zounds, this interruption is abominable.

Dor.

Dor. Ay, this is right; now the rooms are thrown together, we shall have space enough for a country dance in the evening—Villars, we now are brothers.

Villars. To my unspeakable transport.

Sir John. [to Willoughby, who seems in private conversation with him.] Nay, no acknowledgment, my dear Mr. Willoughby—I am acting no more than an interested part, and consulting my own wishes in the wishes of my children.

Will. [to his wife.] Doesn't every thing happen for the best now?—And isn't this excellent young man, to whom I probably owe my child, another proof, that if we are desirous of happiness, we must labour to deserve it.

Mrs. Will. [aside.] My Scotch scheme has help'd the business greatly for all that.

Sir John. We'll have a public wedding—the friends of all our families shall be invited—and Mr. Villars, let not any humility in the situation of yours, prevent you from calling the worthy to be witnesses of the justice which fortune renders to your merit.

Villars. Sir, your goodness is unbounded—but justice obliges me to tell you, that the man thus honour'd with your esteem, is even more humble than you think him; that he has no family, no relations—and, out of this company, no friends.

Will. How's this?

Sir John. Pray, wasn't Mr. Villars, the clergyman in my neighbourhood, your uncle?

Villars. He was the best of men; and more than a father to me in every thing but the actual relation.

Will. [impatiently.] Stand out of the way——

Mrs. Will. My dear, I desire you won't forget the rules of propriety.

Will. You said, Sir, you were ignorant of your family.

Villars. I did, Sir.

Will. Some unhappy father, like me, now bleeds for the loss of a son—pray go on——

Mrs. Will. My dear——

Villars. At an early stage of infancy, some wandering miscreants stole me from my friends, and carried me into a distant part of the country,

country, where a woman, who call'd herself my mother, being committed to prison for a theft, fell ill of a fever, that put a period to her life—with her dying breath she related this circumstance, and wou'd have told more, but the last agonies taking away her utterance, prevented the possibility of any farther declaration.

Sir John. How unfortunate!

Miss Dor. How extremely unfortunate!

Villars. It wou'd have been still more unfortunate, hadn't the good Mr. Villars, who kept a little academy in the place, attended the poor wretch with medicines, and look'd with an eye of compassion on my helpless situation—Mr. Villars was the universal friend of mankind, the rich never mention'd him without reverence, and the poor never beheld him without joy. But his income was too narrow for the extent of his benevolence, and he was involved in continual distresses from the uncommon excellence of his heart.

Sir George. Zounds, no person doubts his being a good man.

Villars. Mr. Villars, without hesitating, ordered me to be taken care of, and as soon as I was capable of instruction, received me into his house, where I was educated in common with the rest of his pupils—and at last grew sufficiently qualified to be his assistant; but his necessities encreasing with the exercise of his virtues, notwithstanding my utmost assiduity, he was obliged to sell his academy, and I had at last the mortification of closing his eyes in the very prison, from which I was originally rescued by the greatness of his humanity.

Miss Dor. And was it just at this time that Sir John bought the seat in your neighbourhood?

Villars. It was, Madam—and it was at this time also, that hearing Sir John had an occasion for an assistant in some literary employments, I procured the recommendation to him which has given me the honour of being known in this family—The only trace of what I ever was, is this picture; which was by some means in my possession when I was stolen, as the woman who stole me declared in the course of her imperfect narration; fearing to dispose of it, she kept it to the hour of her death, and then deliver'd it up as a possible means of finding out my family—

Sir John. Let me see this picture.

Will. No, let me see it for the love of Heaven—O Sir John—Sir John—this was Lady Dormer's picture—she made a present of it to my first wife, and here on the setting are the initials of her name.

Sir John. I remember it perfectly—I myself ordered the letters to be engraved.

Villars. I can scarce speak.

Will. While I have power to ask—tell me, Sir, what is your age?

Villars. Twenty-two.

Will. Receive my thanks, receive my thanks, kind Heav'n!—O my boy, my boy! Providence still orders all things for the best, and I am in reality your father.

Villars. O, Sir! bless your son, and assure him he has a father.

Miss Will. [embracing him.] My brother my deliverer too!—this is happiness indeed—

Mrs. Will. Let me embrace you too—Your sister will tell you what a mother-in-law I am, and how much she is indebted to my lessons of propriety. Well! I begin myself to think every thing happens for the best, after the unexpected good fortune of this morning.

Dor. Not to Sir George, I am sure—for he loses a good estate by this unexpected discovery. [Here Miss Montagu, Miss Dormer, Sir John, and Dormer, seem congratulating Villars—so does Sir George.]

Sir George. What, you begin to crow again, do you?—But, let me tell you, I think every accident happens for the best, which enables me to do an act of justice, and advance the welfare of the deserving.

Miss Mont. Generously consider'd indeed, Sir George—few people, I believe, would give up a fortune so easily.

Sir George. Why, my friend Jack there, if he lost both an estate and a mistress in a couple of hours, wou'd hardly set so good a face upon matters, notwithstanding he is much my superior in serenity of countenance.

Sir John. And, perhaps, Sir George, even you, may be a considerable gainer in the end, if we can but contrive to make an actual comedy of to-day's adventures, by your marriage with a certain lady in this company. [Looking at Miss Montagu.]

Sir George. And possibly that might be yet effected, through your interposition, Sir John, with Miss Montagu.

Miss

Miss Mont. What? is your denouement to be produced at my expence? Upon my word, I should be much obliged to Sir John's interposition for such a purpose!

Sir George. I shou'd at least, Madam—and though I come rather with an ill grace after so recent a rejection—

Dor. Your affection is not unadulterated now, George.

Sir George. Why, no—But I hav'n't yet told Miss Montagu—that death itself is infinitely preferable to the idea of offending her—*[ludicrously.]* though I would readily risk my life to purchase her favourable opinion. *[turning to her.]*

Miss Mont. Well, don't talk to me on this subject now, Sir George—You have to be sure, merited much—and you are in every respect so greatly the opposite of my confident swain there, who thought I must fly into his arms the moment he condescended to receive me—that—however, I won't hear a syllable from you now—if you can make a tolerable bow to me, do, but don't let me hear a syllable of nonsense, I beg of you.

Sir George. This goodness—

Dor. Didn't the lady say she wouldn't hear a syllable of nonsense—

Sir George. And so you begin to talk to her, do you?

Mrs. Will. Mighty fine! is it nonsense to make a grateful acknowledgment for the kindness of a lady—What will the men come to at last?

Sir George. So he thinks, Madam—Though Villars, *[aside to Villars.]* 'tis a little hard, because Miss Montagu chooses to consult her own happiness, that I am to acknowledge the receipt of an obligation.

Sir John. My dear Sir George, Miss Montagu has too much discernment not to see the value of so deserving a lover—Address her therefore, certain of success, and look securely for happiness according to Mr. Wilmoughby's principle, because you richly merit it.

Will. Right, Sir John—Providence looks down delighted on the actions of the worthy, and, however it may command adversity to frown on the beginning of their days, they will acknowledge, with me, that all it's dispensations are full of benignity in the end.

END OF THE FIFTH ACT.

EPILOGUE.

SPOKEN BY MRS. BARRY.

MODISH divines, at court and in the city,
Are, in their pulpits, hum'rous, gay, and witty—
They've now chang'd hands, the stage and pulpit teaching,
Sermons are plays, and plays are merely preaching—
A Word to the Wise, a pretty pert adviser!—
As if 'twere possible to make you wiser :
Yet as each here, may think the Poet labours
Not to teach him, but to instruct his neighbours ;
As the bright tenants of that splendid row
Sneer on the pit, for beings much below ;
And these in turn, as things in order move,
Toss up the sneer to those who mount above :
The gods look down, and let their pity fall
On front, side, green, stage-boxes, pit, and all.
Let me, before your carriages appear,
Breathe one soft word, ye wise ones, in your ear.
You, stop your chairs, [to the side-boxes.] your backs [to the pit.] won't
run away ;
And ladies, [to the gallery.] put not on your pattins pray :—
And first, ye soft, ye sweet romantic maids,
Who die for purling streams, and sylvan shades,
And think for better and for worse, to take
The best of husbands, in a darling rake ;
Who brings a shatter'd fortune to the fair,
With mind and body wanting vast repair ;
Shall I for once your tender thoughts reveal ?
'Tis fine to hear him swear, to see him kneel ;
His tongue with worn-out ecstasies will run,
'Till he has triumph'd, 'till the wife's undone ;
And then that tender strain, so love-creating,
Turns to, " Death, Madam, hold your cursed prating,—

*

" You

*" You quite distract me—prithee farther stand——
" I won't be teaz'd—Zounds, take away your hand——"*
*This is a sad change, ladies, but 'tis common,
Man will be man, and woman will be woman ;
For Villars is a phœnix, where's his brother ?
'Twill take a hundred years to find another.
Yet you, ye Sires, whom time should render wise,
You act as if each moment it could rise ;
Forgetting all, what you yourselves have been,
You trust your girls with Dormers at fifteen ;
Throw your poor lambkins in the tyger's way,
Then stare to find a rake—a beast of prey.
Learn prudence here—and, O ! you precious blades,
Whether cockaded, or without cockades ;
Whether, haranguing for the public good,
You shake St. Stephen's—or the Robinhood—
Who ring our charms for ever in our ears,
Yet inly triumph at a virgin's tears ;
Be now convinc'd—the libertine disclaim,
And live to honour, if not dead to shame.
What is the plaudit of a fool when mellow,
Roaring in raptures, a damn'd honest fellow ?
Will that repay you for the bosom stings ?
Damn'd honest fellows, oft are worthless things——
But I'll stop here, I will not sermonize——
A foolish woman can't instruct the wise.*

I am quite assured no further further hand—
I would be glad—Nathaniel, take away your hand—
This is a fine change, ladies, but the common
The world is full of such things, and I am sure
For I have a plan, and I am sure it will be
I will take a hundred years to find another

It is not, as you say, a hundred years to find another
I am not, as you say, a hundred years to find another

Forgetting the whole of your conversation, I am sure

I am sure you will find it very interesting

I am sure you will find it very interesting

I am sure you will find it very interesting

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C L E M E N T I N A :

A

T R A G E D Y.

GEORGE COLMAN, Esq.

WHEAT
CLEMINTIN

TRAGEDY

T O
GEORGE COLMAN, Esq.

Dear SIR,

WHEN I inscribe this Tragedy to you, I mean to pay myself a very high compliment ; the utmost I could possibly say of you, would by no means extend your Reputation ; but it will do me much honour to declare, that so celebrated a Writer has distinguished CLEMENTINA with the most essential attention, and that so valuable a man has given me leave to sign myself, what I truly am,

Dear SIR,

His most faithful

and most obliged

humble servant,

The AUTHOR.

P R O T O C O L
G E O R G E C O L M A N
E D I T O R

Dear Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th inst. in relation to the matter of the proposed publication of a new edition of the "History of the State of New York," and in reply to inform you that the same has been forwarded to the proper authorities for their consideration. I am, Sir, very respectfully,
Yours, &c.

Dear Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 15th inst. in relation to the matter of the proposed publication of a new edition of the "History of the State of New York," and in reply to inform you that the same has been forwarded to the proper authorities for their consideration. I am, Sir, very respectfully,
Yours, &c.

The Author.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 20th inst. in relation to the matter of the proposed publication of a new edition of the "History of the State of New York," and in reply to inform you that the same has been forwarded to the proper authorities for their consideration. I am, Sir, very respectfully,
Yours, &c.

P R O L O G U E.

BY GEORGE COLMAN, Esq.

SPOKEN BY MR. BENSLEY.

IN these, our moral and religious days,
Men dread the crying sin of writing Plays;
While some, whose wicked wit incurs the blame,
Howe'er they love the trespass, fly the shame.

If, a new holy war with Vice to wage,
Some preacher quits the pulpit for the stage,
The Rev'rend Bard, with much remorse and fear,
Attempts to give his Evening-Lecture here.

The work engender'd, to the world must rise;
But yet the father may elude our eyes.
The parish on this trick of youth might frown,
And thus, unown'd, 'tis thrown upon the Town.

At our Director's door he lays the sin,
Who sees the Babe, relents, and takes it in;
To swathe and dress it first unstrings his purse,
Then kindly puts it out to You—to nurse.

Should some young Counsel, through his luckless star,
By writing Plays turn truant to the Bar,
Call'd up by you to this High Court of Wit,
With non inventus we return the writ.
No latitat can force him to appear,
Whose failure and success cause equal fear.
Whatever fees his clients here bestow,
He loses double in the Courts below.

Grave solemn Doctors, whose prescribing pen
Has in the trade of Death kill'd many men,
With vent'rous quill here tremblingly engage
To slay Kings, Queens, and Heroes, on the stage.

*The Great, if great men write, of shame afraid,
Come forth incog—and Beaux, in masquerade.
Some Demireps in wit, of doubtful fame,
Though known to all the town, withhold their name.
Thus each by turns ungratefully refuse
To own the favours of their Lady-Muse;
Woo'd by the Court, the College, Bar and Church,
Court, Bar, Church, College, leave her in the lurch.*

*'Tis yours to-night the work alone to scan;
Arraign the bard, regardless of the man!
If Dulness waves her poppies o'er his play,
To critic fury let it fall a prey;
But if his art the tears of Pity draws,
Ask not his name—but crown him with applause!*

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

ANSELMO,
GRANVILLE,
PALERMO,
ADORNO,

Mr. Savigny.
Mr. Bentley.
Mr. Wroughton.
Mr. Gardner.

W O M E N.

CLEMENTINA,
ELIZARA,

Mrs. Yates.
Miss Pearce.

Citizens, Guards, &c.

S C E N E. Venice.

TIME—The Time of Representation.

CLEMENTINA:

A

TRAGEDY.

ACT I.

An Apartment in ANSELMO'S Palace.

Enter CLEMENTINA and ELIZARA.

Clementina. **D**ISTRACTION! here so soon?

Elizara. This very hour—

Your good, your noble, yet misguided father,

This moment chill'd me with the hated tale;

Then seizing eagerly my trembling hand,

"Tell Clementina, tell your stubborn friend,"

Cry'd he, in accents positive and stern,

"That brave Palermo, just return'd from chains,

"Chains greatly purchas'd in his country's cause,

"Must now receive such welcome, such affection,

"As suits her virtue, and Anselmo's daughter.—

"Tell her, my word's irrevocably giv'n,

"And bid her guard the honour of her father."

Clementina. Why, let the storm exert its utmost rage,

And burst in thunder on my wretched head!

Let this severe, this unrelenting father,

Cast me a houseless wand'rer on the world,

Yet shall my soul with unabating firmness

Deny her sanction to Palermo's claim.

O! Elizara, you who know the cause,

The endless cause of Clementina's tears,
 Who saw the awful, though the secret rite
 That gave this hand, now widow'd, to Rinaldo;
 Is there, in all the various rounds of woe,
 A curse so great, a pang so exquisite,
 As this poor breast is singled out to feel?

Elizara. Indulge not thus a painful recollection!

Clementina. Oh memory! ev'n madness cannot lose it!
 Mangled with wounds, amidst unnumber'd foes,
 My hapless husband for his country fell!
 Yet, the sad story of our loves conceal'd,
 I was allow'd no privilege of tears,
 But doom'd to hide the anguish of my heart.—
 And now, in all the fulness of despair,
 To have another forced upon me! horror!
 It is not to be borne!—But I'm resolv'd,
 And will devote the remnant of my life
 To lost Rinaldo's memory, or die
 Some little hour before my griefs would end me.

Elizara. Alas, I feel the sorrows of your bosom,
 With all the ardent sympathy of friendship;
 And know how souls so delicate as yours,
 Must spurn th' idea of a second lord.
 Yet blame no more the sternness of Anselmo;
 The ancient hate too long, too idly cherish'd,
 Between your angry father and Rinaldo's,
 First urg'd the measure of a private union.
 A stranger, therefore, to your grief, Anselmo
 Claims but the right which custom, and which nature,
 Have long given parents o'er their children's hearts.

Clementina. What claim, what right, misjudging Elizara!
 Can tyrant custom plead, or nature urge
 To force the free election of the soul?
 Say, should affection light the nuptial torch,
 Or should the rash decision of a father
 Doom his sad race to wretchedness for ever?

No,

No, Elizara; custom has no force,
Nature no right, to sanctify oppression;
And parents vainly tell us of indulgence,¹
When they give all but happiness to children.

Elizara. True—yet a cruel crisis in your fate,
Has much to offer for the good Anselmo.
He fondly thinks his daughter disengaged;
Believes too, fondly, that Palermo's merit
Must touch the gentle bosom of my friend:
If then determin'd to reject his choice,
At once throw off constraint—at once be open,
And seal his lips for ever on the subject,
By a frank mention of your fatal story.

Clementina. What! and expose my dear Rinaldo's kindred
To all the fury of enraged Anselmo,
The now acknowledged ruler of the state;
Who, though renown'd for wisdom and for justice,
Yet in the points, the cruel points of honour,
Is rigid, stern, and fatally severe?
No, Elizara; though these fading eyes
No more must hope to gaze upon Rinaldo,
Though the soul-swelling language of my woes,
Falls unregarded on the silent tomb,
And boasts no power to call my slaughter'd hero
From the dark, dreary mansions of the dead;
Still let me guard whatever he held dear,
Nor pluck down added ruin on his house!

Elizara. Anselmo's justice will o'ercome his hatred—
Were he inclined to make his will his law,
Or wish'd for means to gratify resentment,
He has the power already; but his mind,
Superior ever to the thought of wrong,
Can feel no passion to disgrace his virtue.

Clementina. The best may err, nor will I tempt his rage;
The mighty measure of my woe is full—
Why then, when fate's unmerciful decree

Has

Has curst me up to such a height of ill,
 Why should I shudder at the gathering storm,
 Or seek for shelter in another's sorrow?
 I now have no asylum but the grave;
 Though did peace court me from the bowers of bliss,
 My soul would scorn to hear the charmer's voice,
 If she required me to perform a deed,
 That either shock'd my justice, or my honour.

Elizara. Then summon all your firmness, *Clementina*!—
 For here Anselmo comes, and brings Palermo;
 O that your terrors for Rinaldo's kindred,
 May still subside, and hear the voice of reason!
 Your soul is ill adapted to disguise;
 And without cause to disappoint his views,
 Must be as fatal as to tell him all.

Clementina. They're here—let us retire—Palermo's presence
 Is now a thousand deaths—and though prepared
 With fortitude to act—still, *Elizara*,
 While I can shun the conflict, let me spare,
 Spare even the feelings of a cruel father! [Exit.]

Enter ANSELMO and PALERMO.

Anselmo. Gone so abruptly!—Gone at our approach!—
 And yet, my son, the crimson hue of virtue
 Will always deepen at a lover's sight,
 Who comes to ask his certain day of transport,
 And knows the hour of apprehension o'er.

Palermo. 'Tis just, my lord—But still however lovely,
 The soft emotion of these gentle terrors,
 Spreads in the blooming daughters of perfection,
 Still *Clementina* might have kindly given
 A long lost lover welcome from his bonds;
 And nobly told him that his ruin'd fortunes
 Were even deem'd merit with Anselmo's daughter.

Anselmo. Think not, *Palermo*, of your ruin'd fortunes;
 My *Clementina*, with her father's eyes,

Regardless

Regardless looks on dignity and wealth;
And holds the mind pre-eminent in both,
That boasts a bright pre-eminence in virtue.

Palermo. When sharp adversity has stung the mind,
It makes us doubly conscious of neglect:
And sure a soul less sensible than mine
Had room to start at Clementina's coldness.
Judge then by all that headlong fire of youth
Which once swell'd up your own impassion'd breast,
If I could let indifference pass unnoticed?
He never loved that bore a slight with temper,
Nor ever merited a worthy heart,
Who meanly stoop'd, contented with a cold one.

Anselmo. No more, my son!—This day rewards your sufferings,
For Clementina shall to-day be yours;
And while love courts you with his ripest roses,
The golden sun of honourable greatness
Shines out to crown you with his warmest beams—
Our native land—but what exceeds all price,
Our native liberty shall soon be ours;
And soon Palermo nobly shall revenge
On haughty Ferdinand, that scourge of earth,
The wrongs ill-fated Venice has sustain'd,
The wrongs which, heedless of a soldier's glory,
Th' imperial plund'rer on my son himself
So poorly, meanly, infamously heap'd,
When in a base exaction for his ransom,
He seiz'd his all, nor left th' indignant warrior
A home to rest in from the weight of chains—
Our French ally, the nobly-minded Lewis,
This hour dispatches an ambassador,
To give our country renovated being,
And burst asunder every yoke of Spain.

Palermo. The glorious news o'er pays an age of bonds!
O! for a curse, a quick dispatching curse.

To blast the ruthless tyrant on his throne,
 And mark him out through all succeeding ages,
 A dread example to despotic kings!
 But say, and bless me with some certain hope;
 On what foundation does the royal Lewis
 Bid us thus boldly, confidently look
 For instant vengeance, and for instant freedom?

Anselmo. That I am yet to learn.—But noble still
 I ever found him in our various treaties;
 And therefore cannot, will not, doubt him now.
 Sunk by his late distresses, Ferdinand
 Now mourns his dreams of universal empire,
 And shrinks in secret at the arms of France.

Palermo. Eternal praises to the God of battles!
 Yes, scepter'd savage, we may reach you yet,
 And boldly tell you in the face of nations,
 That royal robbers from unerring justice
 Demand a double measure of perdition!—
 The needy ruffian, in his hour of hunger,
 Has some excuse for prowling on his neighbour;
 But when the arm, the mighty arm of kings,
 That shou'd protect all mankind from oppression,
 Is stretch'd to seize on what it ought to guard,
 Then Heaven's own brand in aggravated fire,
 Shou'd strike th' illustrious villain to his hell;
 And war in mercy for a groaning world.

Anselmo. Oh, nobly said!—Our cause is just, and Heaven
 Fights on our side: for late, the Spanish troops
 In two great fields were wholly overthrown,
 And fill'd the plains with myriads of their dead.
 Our navies too, though some Venetian cities
 Lie humbled still beneath the tyrant's yoke,
 Fill Spain with constant and with just alarms;
 For such a blaze of unexampled glory
 Has crown'd the fleets entrusted to my care,

That

That though deprived of more than half our realm,
We still remain a formidable foe,
And rule triumphant o'er the boundless wave.

Palermo. How the bright prospect bursts upon my view,
And lifts me up in fancy to the stars!
O did the fair, the matchless Clementina,
View me with eyes less rigidly severe,
This once blest hour had madden'd me with rapture!

Anselmo. Again, Palermo? — But I cease to chide,
And go, my son, to end your doubts for ever. —
If I know aught of Clementina's heart,
'Twill beat in honest unison to mine,
And give an added welcome to your claim,
Because you've now, an added need of fortune.

Palermo. Too generous Anselmo!
Anselmo. Nay, no thanks!

The man who bears not to a friend distress'd
A double will to ratify engagements,
Stands self-convicted at the bar within,
The base assassin of his native honour. **[Exit.]**

Palermo. [alone.] Why did I wound this venerable bosom,
With any doubt of Clementina's truth?
And yet disquiet hangs about my heart;
A secret voice incessantly suggests,
That Clementina was not born for me:
But let me not anticipate misfortune!
When fate has struck, 'tis time enough to feel;
And he is best prepared against the blow,
Whose conscious virtue never has deserved it. **[Exit.]**

Scene changes to CLEMENTINA'S Apartment.

CLEMENTINA alone.

Now, Clementina, — now the trial comes —
Call up th' inherent greatness of your soul,
And shew Anselmo, shew this rigid sire
That

That his own firmness animates his daughter!
 What, does he think that force can move my temper?
 No; sacred spirit of my dear Rinaldo,
 If kindly hov'ring round your wretched wife,
 You still observe her in this world of woe,
 Look, and applaud her in an hour of terror!
 Look, and behold, how faithful to her vows,
 She braves a sure destruction for your sake;
 Braves all the stings of poverty and scorn,
 Her father's fury, and her house's hate,
 To live the ceaseless mourner of your fall!

Enter ANSELMO.

Anselmo. Well, Clementina,—Have I yet a daughter?

Clementina. Say rather, Sir,—if I have yet a father?

Anselmo. Yes, Clementina, an unhappy father,
 Who now implores compassion from his child:
 I see, I see with infinite regret,
 Your scorn, your fix'd aversion to Palermo;
 And though I came, determin'd to exact
 A strict, a rigid instance of your duty,
 My aching soul, quite melted at your tears,
 Rejects the sterner sentiment of force,
 And bends the weeping suppliant to a daughter.

Clementina. O could the secret volume of my heart,
 Be laid this moment openly to view,
 My father there, would read my pride to please him.
 Let him ask all from Clementina's duty,
 Which wretched Clementina can perform;
 Let him do this, and he's at once obey'd.
 But when he asks her to direct her wishes,
 To turn the mighty current of the mind,
 And join the streams, the ever warring streams
 Of boundless love and limitless aversion;
 There he exceeds her utmost stretch of power,
 And only gives occasion for her tears.

Anselmo.

Anselmo. Look round on all th' accomplish'd sons of Venice,
And say who shines superior to Palermo?
Take then his hand, and bless your doating father!—
Let us not now in poverty desert him,
Nor aid the arrow of a galling need,
With the keen dart of disappointed love!
No, Clementina, let us nobly claim
A great alliance with his ruin'd fortunes,
And give a bright example to our country,
That worth is all things, with the truly worthy!

Clementina. Palermo's merits, and Palermo's wants,
Alike receive my praises, and my pity;
But, venerable Sir, if e'er my peace,
My soul's dear peace, was tender to your thoughts,
Spare me, O spare me, on this cruel subject!
Let the brave youth, so honour'd with your friendship,
Partake your wealth, but do not kill your daughter.
Do not, to give him a precarious good,
Doom me to certain wretchedness for ever!
I have an equal claim upon your heart,
And call as much for favour as Palermo.

Anselmo. A little time, sweet soother of my age,
Will charm that gentle bosom into rest,
And ev'n return Palermo love for love.
Then, Clementina! O my soul's whole comfort,
Refuse a kneeling father if you can! [Kneels.]
Here at your feet, the author of your being,
Who never stoop'd to aught before but Heaven,
Begs for compassion—Must he beg in vain?

Clementina. O mercy, mercy! Will you kill your daughter?
Rise, Sir, O rise! and save me from distraction!

Anselmo. [rising.] My word, my child, has never yet been broken.—
Do not in age expose me to dishonour!
Save your poor father at the verge of life,
O! nobly save him from the guilt of falsehood!
In this reversal of Palermo's fortunes,

The slanderous tongue of all my house's foes,
Will mark me out to universal shame;
And tell the world his poverty alone,
Has lost the daughter of the base Anselmo.

Clementina. No more—I yield—and am a wretch for ever.

Anselmo. O! say not so, my soul's supreme delight!
Applauding Heav'n shall bless your filial virtue,
And give your heart that joy you give your father.
My transport grows too mighty to be borne—
O let me hasten to the brave Palermo,
And raise him from despondency to rapture!

Clementina. [alone.] Rinaldo's widow, wedded to Palermo!
Where shall I now find refuge from reflection,
Or how root up the agonizing thought,
That brings this horrid marriage to my view?
I was prepared for all a father's fury,
But was not arm'd against a father's tears.
How could I see him weeping at my feet,
Toft in a whirlwind of contending passions,
And yet retain the purpose of my soul?
Ev'n if the fainted spirit of my husband,
From the bright mansions of eternal day,
Beheld the anguish of his struggling heart,
It must have kindly prompted it to pity.
O, this Palermo!—This detested union!
Married to him!—The widow of Rinaldo?
Give me, ye blessed ministers of peace,
Some instant portion of that soothing stream,
Which pours a deep oblivion on the mind,
And drowns the sense of memory for ever!

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

A C T II.

*An Apartment in ANSELMO'S Palace.**Enter GRANVILLE and ELIZARA.*

Elizara. **A**ND is it possible? Do I once more
Behold Rinaldo?—

Granville. Yes, my *Elizara*;

Yet, lovely maid, take heed alone to know me

For what I seem—Th' ambassador of France.

As such alone Anselmo has received me,

And such my king confirms me.—But declare,

How fares my Clementina?—How does she

Support the oft proclaim'd; the general tale,

That now six moons has rank'd me with the dead?

Elizara. She bears it like a wife that truly loved—

But by what miracle again restored

Acquaint me!—for concurring multitudes

Beheld your fall in battle, and reported,

That in a pile of greatly-slaughter'd heroes,

A Gallic squadron bore you from the field.

Granville. I fell indeed amidst the gen'ral carnage,

And lay some hours among the honour'd dead,

For whom the vanquish'd, France's generous sons,

Made one bold effort to obtain a grave:

Here a brave youth of that exalted nation,

Close by whose side, with emulative fire,

I fought for Venice on that hapless day,

Beheld the man he deign'd to call his friend,

And by a kind of miracle restored me—

Then to the king, in terms of warmest weight,

Proclaim'd my fancied merits.—Royal Lewis

Received the story with a gracious ear,

And pour'd profuse his favours on Rinaldo.

Elizara.

Elizara. Why then, O why, distinguish'd thus, thus honour'd,
Did not Rinaldo sooth his sorrowing friends,
And ease the torments of a wife's despair?

Granville. O Elizara! how my soul has felt
For all the anguish she was doom'd to suffer,
That Heav'n, which knows the greatness of my love,
Alone can witness — But the conquering arms
Of widely wasting Ferdinand, cut off
Our commerce with the world — and had not fate,
In two late fields propitious smiled upon us;
Rinaldo yet, distracted and forlorn,
Had dragg'd a chain of miserable being;
Nor known, as now he shall, th' ecstatic bliss
Of speaking peace to weeping Clementina.

Elizara. But whence this transformation? — Why conceal'd
Beneath the garb of France, does brave Rinaldo
So closely seek to hide himself in Granville?

Granville. For ends of moment. — If the charge I bear
Meets, as I hope, and as I think it ought,
A warm reception from Anselmo — Then
I come determin'd to avow my marriage;
And gracious Lewis will, I trust, remove
The fatal feuds that shake our angry houses.

Elizara. But should Anselmo disapprove your charge,
What measure then remains to be pursued,
And what becomes of wretched Clementina?

Granville. There my disguise is suited to assist me;
Should he refuse to join the views of France,
My orders are that instant to return,
And my design, to bear off Clementina.

Elizara. You talk, Rinaldo, with an air of triumph;
Think you the first of our Venetian daughters
Can in a moment thus be borne away;
Borne from her palace compass'd round with guards,
Surrounding virgins, and a watchful father?

Granville.

Granville. My name conceal'd and all my train instructed,
My king's credentials bearing but the title,
Which he himself has given me, and which yet
Has reach'd no ear of Venice but your own,
Can there exist a doubt of my success?
Unknown—unnoticed—unsuspected quite,
A trusty friend shall lead her to the beach,
If Clementina, like myself, disguised
Will venture aught to bless her faithful husband.

Elizara. Rinaldo shou'd pursue a diff'rent course,
A course more suited to his worth and honour.
Now independent, now so raised in France,
What can you dread from Venice or its leader?
Your fortunes now are equal to your birth.
Should then your embassy displease Anselmo,
Act like yourself!—throw off this dark disguise,
And nobly claim your wife.—You know his justice,
And know besides he cannot hate you farther.

Granville. Fain, gentle maid, would I pursue this counsel,
And in the face of day assert my right;
But if the purport of my public business,
Which Heaven avert! should raise Anselmo's anger,
My life, once known, must expiate my crime.
I come, I hope, to bless the state of Venice;
But I come also, with a foreign ruler—
This, you know well, is death by law declared;
Nor could th' ambassador of France, preserve
Th' offending subject from the stroke of justice.

Elizara. May Heaven indulgent smile upon your hopes!
But oh! I dread, I dread a disappointment.
And see, impatience frowning on his brow.
Hither Anselmo comes.—Let me fly hence,
And bless my friend, with tidings of her lord!

[Exit.]

Enter

Enter ANSELMO, with Papers.

Anselmo. Well, Sir, the views of Lewis are at length made plain
Reveal'd; and here, I see, he speaks them plainly.

Granville. Why, sage Anselmo, this offended brow
I trust my master's offers have deserved—
Your highest approbation; for they breathe but
Nought but attachment, and regard for Venice.

Anselmo. Is this the basis of his love for Venice?
Has he stood forth a champion for our freedom,
Merely himself to tread us into dust,
And saved us from the arm of haughty Spain,
To make us bear his own oppressive yoke?
Go, tell your king, and tell him from Anselmo,
That France and Venice can be friends no more;
Tell him, to us, all tyrants are the same;
Or if in bonds the never-conquer'd soul
Can feel a pang more keen than slavery's self,
'Tis when the chains, that crush us into dust,
Are forged by hands from which we hoped for freedom.

Granville. And what idea does my business raise,
Of slaves or tyrants, servitude or chains?
'Tis true, the gracious Lewis has propos'd
To take the state of Venice to his care,
If sage Anselmo, her illustrious leader,
Approves the scheme of well-concerted empire—
He sees with deep, with nobly-minded sorrow,
How, still expos'd to every powerful neighbour,
You fall a victim to alternate spoilers;
Hence, with paternal tenderness, he wishes
T' enrol your sons among the sons of France,
And make the subjects of his different realms,
One equal, common, and united people.
If this be slavery——

Anselmo. 'Tis the worst of slavery,
Tamely to bend our necks beneath the yoke,

And

And suffer fraud, to talk us out of freedom.—
 If we must yield before superior force,
 Let us at least deserve the name of men;
 Let us fall nobly, if we are to fall,
 And give the world, in characters of blood,
 Eternal causes to lament our fate,
 But never one occasion to despise us!

Granville. Far from my bosom be the abject thought!
 To stoop the servile minister of greatness,
 Or crouch the advocate for lawless power:
 The heir myself of heaven-descended freedom,
 I wish the same bright heritage to all,
 And inly scorn a brotherhood with slaves.
 Yet sure, some form your government must know;
 The reins of state must somewhere be devolved,
 And he who holds them, name him as you please,
 Must be your prince, and you must be his subjects.
 Why then, if Lewis solemnly shall swear,
 To hold your rights inviolably sacred;
 Still to maintain the spirit of your laws,
 And never know another line of action;
 Why should you turn indignantly away,
 And slight the offer of a mighty monarch,
 Who knows that form of government is best,
 Which best secures the welfare of the people?

Anselmo. Because your monarch, in this very offer,
 Seeks to subvert our glorious constitution;
 Seeks to erect hereditary rule,
 Where virtue only gives superior rank;
 And where the genius of descended Rome,
 Has levell'd all distinctions but in goodness.
 What is his promise to maintain us free?
 Sir, we'll maintain that freedom for ourselves,
 And to maintain it, we reject your master;
 The power, so safe in his benignant hand,
 Is safer still, retain'd within our own;

'We know the worth of liberty too well,
Ever to cast the blessing basely from us,
Or still more basely to survive our honour.

Granville. You need not cast the mighty blessing from you.—
The king my master wishes for no more,
Than such mere title to the realms of Venice,
As to his subjects and the world may warrant
A warm exertion of continual care
For this his dear ally.—And mark, my lord; [*shewing a paper.*]
The moment Venice owns him for her sovereign,
This instrument confirms the viceroy's office,
With all the active rule, to great Anselmo
And his heirs for ever.—

Anselmo. Am I awake?
Or can I trust my reason?—Patience—Patience!
Are all the bright achievements of my life
Unable now to save me from disgrace!
Thus to the winds I give the vile proposal: [*tearing the paper.*]
Thus tear the record of imputed shame;
Nor let succeeding ages be inform'd
That mortal man has dared to doubt my honour!

Granville. No more, my lord! my king I see has err'd,
In off'ring peace and happiness to Venice,
Yet let me mourn for you, her wretched race!
Her slaughter'd sons, and violated virgins;
For you, her shrieking matrons; and for you,
O ye unconscious, unoffending babes!—
Driv'n from your humble, yet your chearful homes,
To timeless graves, or everlasting exile!
Anselmo dooms you to this dreadful fate,
And spurns the friendship offer'd to preserve you.

Anselmo. Eternal curses on the baleful friendship,
That seeks to cheat us of our native justice!
And did your mean, your poorly-thinking prince
Suppose Anselmo would betray his country,
Hang up his name to everlasting scorn,

And sell the brightest birthright of a people,
To gain a robber's portion of the plunder !
What could repay me for internal peace,
Or give distinction where I sold my honour ?
The wildest prodigal the world can know,
Is he who madly casts away his virtue ;
And though he gains a sceptre in return,
He's still a wretched loser by the change—

Granville. Enough, my lord ; we end our conf'rence here.—
Venice, 'tis true, admires the good Anselmo ;
And trusts her present safety to his wisdom ;—
Yet if his fellow-citizens shall hear,
How light their happiness is held, when weigh'd
In glory's grand, though too romantic scale,
Well may they mourn this honourable madness,
This dread, though bright, delirium of the mind,
Which seeks for safety in assured destruction,
And blindly murders nations to preserve them.

Anselmo. Whene'er they shew such turpitude of soul,
Make them again an offer of your chains !
But now, the purport of your business o'er,
And public character thrown wholly off,
In the plain province of a private man,
Let me salute the noble lord of Granville ;
And beg, while Venice boasts of such a guest,
He'll not disdain the dwelling of Anselmo !

Granville. My lord, with equal gratitude and pleasure,
I meet your kindness for my little stay ;
My scarce furl'd sails must quickly court the wind,
And bear me back to my expecting master.

Anselmo. Th' assembled senate now requires my presence—
My lord, farewell !—I treat you as a friend.
I never dealt in ceremony yet ; and you'll excuse
Th' unpolish'd manners of Venetian failors.

Granville. The gen'rous frankness of your temper here,
Bespeaks a native honesty and wisdom,

That makes me doubly anxious for the state;
And doubly mourn your harsh reply to Lewis.

Anselmo. Mourn not for us, my lord!—a free-born people
Can have but two bright objects of ambition;
A life of honour, or a death of glory;
And when for virtuous liberty they fall,
They share at least the second greatest blessing,
Which Heaven e'er pour'd in mercy on mankind.

Granville. [alone.] How I admire his fortitude of soul,
And love his pride, though adverse to my wishes!
Once my own bosom vehemently flamed
With all the phrenzy of his noble zeal,
And look'd on death more eligible far,
Than even a government of certain bliss,
Beneath the reign of any foreign ruler.—
But I now wake from all this glitt'ring dream
Of fancied virtue and ideal honour—
My Clementina!

Enter CLEMENTINA.

Clementina. My long-lost Rinaldo!
'Tis he—'tis he, and Elizara err'd not!
The grave has given him back.—All-seeing Heaven,
In kind compassion to a wife's despair,
By some benignant miracle has rais'd him;
And these transported arms again enfold
The best beloved, the most deplored of husbands!

Granville. My life's great bliss! here let me grow for ever.

Clementina. It is too much—I shall run wild with rapture—
How are you saved, and wherefore thus disguis'd?
Yet do not answer—partly Elizara
Has told me of your views—and 'tis enough
I see you safe—That Providence be praised!
Whose mercy sent you at an hour of dread,
To snatch me from destruction!—

Granville.

Granville. O, my love!

I cannot tell you half of what I feel;
Words are too poor.—Yet say, my chiefest good,
Say, do you love with such transcendent truth,
That if the kindness of indulging fate,
Should point out ways of flying with Rinaldo,
To some secure, some hospitable coast,
Alike propitious to our peace and fortune;
Would Clementina, would a wife prefer
The fond, the ardent bosom of a husband,
To the stern mansion of a ruthless father?

Clementina. Would she prefer?—O quickly let him lead her
Through dreary wastes, and never-trodden wilds,
Where heat, cold, famine, in their dread extremes,
At each new footstep strike an added horror;
Through the noon-blaze of fierce autumnal suns,
O'er burning deserts instantly conduct her;
Or where the stiffening nations of the night,
In more than winter freeze beneath the pole;
Through these bear off your faithful Clementina;
And though a filial anguish drowns her eye,
At what her poor, her reverend father feels.
O never question if she loves Rinaldo!

Granville. Thus let me press you to my grateful bosom,
Thus speak the raptures of my swelling heart!

Clementina. O! I have much to tell you of my sorrows—
But what are sorrows now?—The gracious being,
Who from a precipice of guilt and woe,
In this dread crisis, snatch'd me by your hand,
O'erpaye me tenfold for my past afflictions,
And all my tears were ministers of joy. *[Exit.]*

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

A C T III.

ANSELMO'S Palace.

Enter ANSELMO with a Paper, and ADORNO.

Anselmo. FROM Ferdinand himself.—
Adorno. From Ferdinand!

Anselmo. From him, Adorno.—But observe his words:—
 "Touch'd with the various miseries of Venice,
 "The first of Europe's kings salutes the senate;
 "And offers peace, nay friendship to their realms,
 "Peace uncondition'd, and eternal friendship."

Adorno. What! has the royal ruffian been inform'd
 That France has sued us to become her subject;
 And does he, fearful of our base effigy,
 Fearful his rival should obtain our homage,
 Give up his own despotic claim upon us,
 And rather choose to set us wholly free,
 Than see his foe acknowledg'd for our master?

Anselmo. Too plain.—Perdition on his recreant head!
 His motive may be seen.—Too plain, his fears
 Would now usurp the guise of high-soul'd virtue.
 But though we know the source of this proposal,
 Though we are certain that his late defeats,
 Join'd to his dread of our receiving Lewis,
 Have dragg'd the trembling tyrant from his throne,
 To dastard supplication—still his offers
 Demand our prompt acceptance.—He consents
 To yield up all our towns—our captive sons—
 To cease for ever his detested claim,
 And treat us henceforth, as a separate nation,
 A dear ally, but independent people.

Adorno. But say, my lord, what minister he sends,
 To sign these terms of unexpected peace?

Fraud

Fraud and the royal hypocrite are one;
Nor can we trust securely to his word,
When once his interest urges him to break it.

Anselmo. That very interest is our hostage now—
And here too, conscious of our glad concurrence,
He speeds his Alva to confirm the treaty;
Who comes beneath safe-conduct from Colonna,
(Supplying now my absence in the fleet)
And will arrive at Venice ere the eve.

Adorno. So soon?

Anselmo. So says the letter.—But, my friend,
Haste hence!—Convene the senators—the people!—
Within an hour I'll meet them at Saint Mark's;
There, when our peace is happily restored;
They shall receive their government again,
And find a subject in their present ruler. *[Exit Adorno.]*

Enter PALERMO.

Joy to my son!—to Venice boundless joy!—
O my Palermo! I have news that asks
An angel's tongue.—

Palermo. And I have news, that howl'd
In deepest hell, would make the demons tremble.—
Clementina—

Anselmo. Ha! what of her, Palermo?

Palermo. Is false, perfidious—

Anselmo. How?

Palermo. Doats upon another!

Anselmo. Beware, Palermo, this capricious temper!
Doubt seldom lodges in a noble mind;
And he scarce merits to be treated justly,
Whose jealous soul, on light foundation, questions
Th' unfulfilled lustre of another's virtue—
Retract then quick this hasty accusation,
And kindly say my hapless child is dead,
But dare not once to tell me she is worthless!

Palermo.

Palermo. On light foundation did I doubt, my lord,
This sharp reproach had been indeed deserved;
But if incessant coldness, if contempt,
If open insult for protesting love,
And even a noon-day fondness for a stranger,
Are honest grounds of rational suspicion,
Then have I cause for rage and indignation—

Anselmo. By Heav'n, 'tis false! nor shall my child be wrong'd
By any coinage of a dotard's madness;
Her soul, superior to the slanderous charge,
Has proved its worth to more than Roman greatness;
And if she meant not to accept your vows,
Her sense—her pride—her virtue had repulsed them—
Fond of a stranger—Tell me, Sir—what stranger,
What mighty object has alarm'd your fears,
And kindled hell's most fiercely blazing fire,
The fire of groundless jealousy within you?

Palermo. Why will Anselmo treat me with contempt,
And wound the wounded with the darts of scorn?
Think you I rave, or that my restless brain,
Ingenious, seeks out sources of misfortune!
But what if hid within yon secret harbour
You should yourself detect them—what if there
You knew them long conceal'd? What if you saw
Her alabaster arm, as I have seen it,
O damning sight! thrown round the happy villain,
Would you not then, with me, conclude her lost,
And think this ample evidence to prove
The plain perdition of her monstrous falsehood?

Anselmo. And were you, Sir, a father, like Anselmo,
Like me, a doating father—had your child
Through life maintain'd an unsuspected honour,
And rose in virtue as she rose in beauty;
Would you believe, at reason's full meridian,
A maid thus pure, thus eminently spotless,
Could plunge at once in infamy eternal,

†

And

And set fame, fortune, happiness at nought,
Through instant passion for a total stranger?

Palermo. My Lord, I come not with an idiot's tale,
Or wish Anselmo in an angry mood
Should, as an infant, chide a thoughtless daughter:
No; I disdain the thought—I come to guard
No less his honour than my own—to shew
Our mutual danger—and advise, that Granville
May be this moment ordered to his France—
As yet, though highly erring, Clementina
Cannot be compleatly guilty—Send, then,
Her new-found fav'rite instantly from Venice—
She is still undestroy'd; and Granville,
Though thrice my sword avengingly was drawn,
Safe from this arm, enjoys the law of nations.

Anselmo. Rash—desperate youth, forbear to urge my temper—
Or, by yon heaven, the friendship which I hold you,
No more o'erlooks this treatment of my child—
She false—she shameless—Kneel, blasphemer, kneel,
Fall at her feet, and own you've lost your reason;
For nought but madness can excuse the wound,
Which virtue feels in injured Clementina.

Palermo. They're in the harbour yet—convince yourself—
And see how far I wound the cause of virtue,
In this report of faithless Clementina.

Anselmo. I will this instant—But remember, Sir,
Unless your charge proceeds from some mistake
Of probable appearance—unless it springs
From some plain source of obvious misconception,
The purpos'd union never shall take place—
I prize my child's repose too dearly, Sir,
To trust it with a madman—Nor will she
Be e'er prevail'd on to receive a lover,
Who dares to think her capable of baseness. [Exit.

Palermo. [alone.] To think her base—O that I could not think it—
What though her person's spotless and unsullied,

May vie with Zembla's now-descending snows,
 What though her error is ideal yet,
 And actual guilt has stamp'd no fable on her;
 Is not her mind, that all-in-all of virtue,
 Polluted, stained, nay prostitute before me?
 Do I not take, O torture! to my arms,
 A mental wanton, in the rage, the madness
 Of flaming will, and burning expectation?
 Will not this fiend, damnation on him! Granville,
 Will he not dart like lightning to her memory,
 And fire her fancy even——O hold my brain——
 Let me avoid the mere imagination——
 It stabs—it tears—On love's luxurious pillow
 It blasts the freshest roses, and leaves scorpions,
 Eternal scorpions only in their room. [Exit.]

Scene changes to the Arbour in the Garden.

CLEMENTINA and GRANVILLE discovered.

Clementina. No more, my love!—'tis time we reach the palace—
 But remember, if aught adverse should arise,
 Which Heaven forbid, to intercept our flight,
 On no account reveal yourself; reflect,
 Our law is death to all Venetian subjects,
 Who dare propose a government of strangers!

Granville. Fear not, my Clementina:—with strict prudence,
 A prudence rendered doubly nice by love,
 The whole shall be conducted.—

Clementina. For my sake
 Let it—Reveal'd, your public character
 Would now destroy, and not protect you; jealous,
 To fury jealous for their ancient customs,
 The multitude, with all my father's rage,
 Would burn—and O, thus wonderfully saved,
 Again my love, I cannot, must not lose you. [Embracing him.]

Enter ANSELMO.

Anselmo. Death to my fight!

Clementina. Ha! I behold my father!

Anselmo. Yes, blushless girl, you do behold your father.—

And you, O base, inhospitable lord!

You too, behold the much-abus'd Anselmo.—

But hence to France, the native nurse of wiles:

This moment hence to France, or know the next

Is big with fate, and teeming with destruction!

Granville. What is my crime, and wherefore should I go?

Is it a crime to doat upon your daughter?

If that, my Lord, is deadly in your sight,

I am indeed a criminal most guilty:

But sure my rank, my fortune, and my fame,

Are no way less, than your approved Palermo's.

Clementina. [kneeling.] O Sir, O Father, O revered Anselmo!

By every name of tenderness and duty;

By the dear mem'ry of that fainted matron,

Who gave me birth, and from her well-earn'd heaven

Beholds me prostrate at your feet for pity;

Break off the curst engagement with Palermo.

Anselmo. Kneel not to me, ungrateful, kindless girl!

I have been prostrate at your feet in vain.

Ask not my pity, yet deny your own;

Nor think a father's fond forgiving heart,

While deeply bleeding, monster! at your shame,

Can quite forget this base capricious falsehood,

Forget the vow scarce cold upon your lip,

To wronged Palermo, your affianced Lord

And give its sanction to this guilty change—

A wanton's passion for a slave of France.

Clementina. A wanton's passion!

Granville. Wanton!—hear, Anselmo—

Clementina. No, let me speak; and let me here assert

The equal rights of justice and of nature;

A wanton's passion—I'm your daughter, Sir,
 But am not therefore to be deem'd a slave;
 I bear you all the reverence, the regard,
 That can inform a filial bosom—yet
 My heart is free, and must consult its feelings;—
 I cannot teach these feelings what you wish,
 I cannot rush, deep perjured, to the altar;
 Nor in the presence of attesting Heaven,
 Profess to honour, what I now despise,
 And swear to love the object of my horror.

Anselmo. Shameless deceiver, peace!—You, Sir, to France!
 Th' impatient winds are swell'd to fill your sails;
 Hence then, and fly the fury of Anselmo!

Granville. Flight was not made for soldiers, nor befits
 Th' ambassador of kings—I claim protection
 From the known law of nations—Mark, my lord!—
 And think in time, I represent a monarch,
 Who will not bear the shadow of an insult.

Anselmo. Dare you assert the sacred law of nations,
 To screen deceit, or sanctify dishonour?
 I spurn all customs opposite to truth,
 And own no rule, but what is own'd by virtue.—
 A guard there strait!

Clementina. Yet force him not away.
 Behold these tears, my father—O look back
 On all the past transactions of my life!
 Have I not ever walk'd with innocence,
 And held one course of unsuspected honour?
 Strong as appearances may speak against me,
 Think, kindly think, there may be yet a cause—
 What would I say—Distraction! Murder Granville?
 And must Anselmo's bosom bleed?—O misery!
 Where shall I turn?—Indeed—indeed, my father,
 I am not criminal—and O believe
 At once I cannot be entirely worthless!

Anselmo.

Anselmo. O impudence of guilt!—when my own eyes,
 With shame have witness'd your licentious fondness!
 Nought but that proof could ever have convinced me;
 For O I loved you with such wild excess,
 And held your purity in such opinion,
 That had an angel told me of this change,
 This rapid, dire transition into vice,
 I still had wanted ocular conviction.
 What ho! a guard!—And can this be my child?
 O nature, nature! this my Clementina?
 And can she thus desert me after all?
 In the cold evening of my age desert me,
 For this once-seen, this host-betraying ruffian?
 Who, gracious Heav'n! O who wou'd be a father!

Enter a Guard.

Arrest that lord!—and bear him to his ship.

Granville. Stand off, ye slaves! by Heaven he dies that stirs!

Clementina. Oh mercy!

Anselmo. Strike, if madly he resist you!

Clementina. Strike here then! pay obedience to your chief,
 And kill his child, his wretched child, before him.

Dispatch us both, or let us both depart;

We go together, or together fall.

Granville. And must I live to see you ravish'd from me?

To think perhaps another—that Palermo—

O snatch me, snatch me from the horrid thought!

It breaks, it rends me on a thousand wheels,

And any death is extasy to this—

Clementina. And do you judge so poorly of my love?

O know me better, and be quite at rest!

This arm, if it must come to that, shall free me.—

Yet, while our hope supplies one glimmering ray,

Let us not urge our fate, before 'tis needful;

Conceal your name and quality with care;

And

And recollect 'tis time enough to die,
When every means of living is deny'd us?

Anselmo. What shallow air of mystery is this?

Trifle not, guards,—but execute your orders!

Granville. Off, barbarians, off!

Clementina. You shall not part us.—

Anselmo. Hew them asunder!

Granville. O my Clementina! [Borne off.

Clementina. It is too much. [Faints.

Anselmo. She faints.—

Enter ELIZARA.

Affist her, quick!

Yet why affist her? O my breaking heart!

Should it not now in mercy be my wish,

To close her eyes for ever on her shame,

And end her being and her crime together?

Elizara. Patience! she's innocent; and see, my Lord,
See, she revives!

Anselmo. O gentle Elizara,

Could the bright lustre of her mind revive,

I might again behold her as I have done;

But that is set in one eternal night,

And now my dream of happiness gives way

To sure disgrace, and aggravated anguish.

Ye fathers, tear the feelings from your hearts!

Ye mothers, drag your infants from the breast,

Dash them remorseless on their kindred flint,

And kill the embryo savageness within them.

They'll else blast all the comforts of your life,

And, viper-like, with death return your fondness—

O nature, nature, can this be my child!

Lost Clementina; wretched, curst Anselmo! [Exit.

Elizara. How does my Clementina?—Look, O look,

And see your truest friend!—

Clementina.

Clementina. Where have I been?
And why am I restored?—'Tis *Elizara*.—
Say, O say, kind maid—where is my husband?
Where is he hurried by his brutal guard?

• *Elizara.* Are you a stranger to your father's order?

Clementina. No—no—I rave—I know it but too well—
O this relentless, this unfeeling father!
Yet why do I exclaim?—His cause for rage
Is just—He only acts as virtue dictates;
And his poor heart is torn for my offence.—
'Tis fate alone that marks me out for woe,
And I shall never see *Rinaldo* more.

Elizara. Persist not thus in unavailing grief;
But praise the goodness that preserves your husband.
Even now the head-strong multitude, enraged
At *Granville's* embassy to change the state,
Throng round the palace, and in thousands threat
A quick and public measure of revenge.
Had he but stay'd another hour, a moment,
Perhaps *Anselmo's*, even your father's power,
Had been too weak, though exercis'd to save him.

Clementina. What does this do, but aggravate my sorrows?
But shew how curs'd, how doubly curs'd my fate,
My cruel fate, has mercilessly made me?
Conceal'd, my husband falls a dreadful victim
To popular resentment.—If acknowledged,
His country's justice leads him to the scaffold—
And flying, gracious, and immortal powers!
Anselmo, burning at my seeming crime,
Presses that fell *Palermo* to his bed.—
Why this is woe, 'tis thick substantial woe,
And shall behold a breast unshrinking here—
Burst from your cells ye demons of despair!
Ye furies clad in tenfold snakes arise!
Yawn quick, ye graves, with all your timeless dead!

Ye

Ye cannot now strike terror to my soul; I have seen Rinaldo's lost, and I can fear no farther!

Elizara. Why this distrust in Heaven's unending mercy? Has it not now pour'd blessings on your head, And work'd an actual miracle to save you, From the wide horror of a double marriage? What is there now but to refuse Palermo, To slight the man you meant this morn to slight, And end a suit you can receive no longer? Hope therefore still, and think the gracious hand, Which led your lord at such a crisis here, Will crown your truth with happiness at last.

Clementina. Go, talk of hope to wretches at the stake, To shrieking mothers o'er their infants dead— Go, bid the murderer, while his hands yet reek With unoffending blood, hope to regain His former peace of mind, or ever know A tranquil thought, a tranquil slumber more!— O, I could curse this base deceiver, hope, Till echo thunder'd execration back, And rent the air with imprecating phrenzy.— [*A shout.* What means that shout? Ha! my fears inform me. Perhaps even now the savage multitude Have seiz'd my husband; and perhaps they now Glut their fell vengeance on his quivering limbs. [*Shout*] Again—it must be so—Barbarians, stay— For me, for me he falls—'Twas Clementina— 'Twas I who led him to your fatal shores— Wreak then your vengeance on his wretched wife, But spare, O spare Rinaldo! [*Runs out wildly, Elizara following.*]

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

ACT

A TRAGEDY.

185

A C T IV.

Scene, ANSELMO'S Palace.

Enter ANSELMO and PALERMO.

Anselmo. **W**ELL, my Palermo—this unlook'd-for rival
Ploughs back his way to tyranny and France.
I saw his canvass whitening on the breeze,
As well to know him certainly departed,
As to restrain the fury of the people,
Who, fired with honest, though misguided zeal,
Forgot his sanctity of public character,
And raved for vengeance on a foe to freedom.

Palermo. The people's voice, howe'er it sometimes errs,
Means always nobly, and is rais'd by virtue;
Their very faults, illustrious from their motives,
Demand respect, nay, ask for admiration,
And soar, at least, half sanctify'd to justice—
There—hear their voice—'tis now swell'd up with rapture.
Alva, the welcome minister of peace,
Excites their joy, and every order hails
The white-wing'd moment, that preserves the state,
And crowns the gen'rous labours of Anselmo.

Anselmo. He comes, e'en earlier than my utmost hope,
And proves how much his sovereign was alarm'd
At the now lucky embassy from Lewis—
Come, my Palermo, let us hasten hence!
And shew due honour to the noble Alva!

Palermo. Fain would I greet him; but alas, my gloom
Would chill the pleasure which it meant to grace.

Anselmo. Remain then here—I wou'd not have it said
That aught could wound a citizen of Venice
Who lived to see his liberty restored.
I am the father of that wretched girl,

at

B b

Who

Who clouds your brow with grief and disappointment;
I am, and feel her conduct like a father:
But when I think upon the countless millions,
Whom this unlook'd-for providence of Heaven
Designs to bless, I cast away my griefs,
And in my country, strive to lose my daughter.

Palermo. Your spirit fires me—I adopt its justice,
And will attempt, if possible, myself,
To lose all memory of this sweet deceiver.

Anselmo. Do—and be dearer to my heart than ever—
Your worth first made you mine; the same, that worth
Shall keep you—Clementina now is sunk
Below your thought; to wed her would be baseness.
Despise her, therefore, as you prize my friendship,
And know I'd scorn to give a shameless woman,
Tho' ten times mine, to any man of honour.

[Exit.]

Palermo. He's right—he's right—I were a slave indeed,
A soul-less slave, to prostitute a thought,
A single thought, on such a woman longer—
Were she as fair as luxury has painted
The nymphs of Paradise to Eastern minds,
I ought to spurn her now—Her heart is lost—
'Tis all debas'd by this licentious passion,
And he who weds the object of his scorn,
May boast of love, but never talk of honour—

[Exit.]

Scene changes to St. Mark's.

Enter ADORNO, Senators, Citizens, Guards, &c.

Adorno. Now is the time, my friends, to press him close,
And make him wholly sovereign of the state;
Which his great talents and unequal virtue
Have thus so happily, so nobly saved—
The nations round us, owe their chiefest strength
To regal government—How were we torn
With jarring interests till the rule supreme,

To

To one great arm was trusted—to Anselmo!
 France—Ferdinand—and every powerful neighbour,
 May still divide us with their sep'rate factions:
 But if we choose a monarch of our own,
 His and the public welfare must be one.—

First Citizen. Is he acquainted with our views, Adorno?
 Have you inform'd him of our grateful purpose?

Adorno. No—For I fear'd his stern disapprobation,
 And only hope the people's general voice
 Will now induce him to accept a throne.

Second Citizen. See where he comes.—

Enter ANSELMO, preceded by a Procession of Priests, Bishops, Senators, &c.

Anselmo. Well, my brave countrymen!
 I once more see you free; the solemn league
 Is happily concluded; and to Heaven
 Our deepest thanks we gratefully must pour,
 For life, for peace, for liberty immortal!
 Here now my labour and commission end.
 The sacred sword, the badge of sovereign power,
 Which in the storms and perils of the state,
 Your gen'ral voice entrusted to my care,
 And bade me carry as your common leader,
 'Till death or freedom finish'd my command,
 This sacred pledge becomes your own again—
 Here to your use I solemnly resign it,
 And sink with transport to a private station;
 More proud the subject of a free-born state,
 Than if I ruled a universe of slaves—

Adorno. My lord Anselmo, your applauding country
 Gives back the sword to that experienced hand,
 Which crowns her sons with liberty and peace:
 Thro' me she offers you a crown, a throne,
 And hails her monarch, in her great preserver.

Start not!—with me the gen'ral voice cries out,
Long live our king—long live the good Anselmo. *[A flourish.]*

Anselmo. Shall I with thanks, or deep-struck indignation,
With grateful heart, or justly kindled ire,
Receive this flatt'ring instance of your favour!
Warm to the voice of virtuous approbation,
I feel a joy beyond the power of words,
To find my actions honour'd with your praise:
But in the rising raptures of the man,
The honest citizen must do his duty;
He must refuse, resentingly refuse,
Th' unthinking bounty, which to pay his service,
Would plunge his country in immediate bondage.

Adorno. This self-denying dignity of soul
Serves but to shew the wisdom of our choice,
And proves how safe a confidence reposed
Will lodge in hands so worthy as Anselmo's.

Anselmo. Long, my brave friends, against the Spanish tyrant,
Have the exalted citizens of Venice
Fought the great cause of justice and mankind:
And will you now, triumphant over force,
From downright gratitude embrace a chain?
What has your glorious fortitude effected,
If in the full fraught transport of your souls,
You lift the man you fondly call deliverer,
To sovereign rule, and crown him for your master?
In such a case your blessing is your bane,
And Spain, a foe less deadly than Anselmo.

Adorno. Does not the use which you have made of power,
Proclaim how much, how amply we should trust you?
Have you employ'd it, but for public good,
Or wish'd to keep it, when that good was answer'd?
Hear then your grateful countrymen, and know
Adorno speaks the wishes of the people,
The people's wishes joyfully conven'd,
Who with one voice now offer you a kingdom.

Anselmo.

Anselmo. I scorn the kingdom that can court a tyrant,
 And while I live, my country shall be free.
 If then my voice deserves the least attention,
 Let me exhort, nay, shame you from your purpose.
 I fought to save you from despotic power,
 Not, giddy men, to be myself your lord:
 You may forget your duty to the state,
 But I'll remember mine, and keep all equal,
 Though I myself am singled out for master.

First Citizen. We'll urge the point no more.

Adorno. I ne'er had urged it,
 But for the public welfare, from belief,
 That all rewards were properly his due,
 Whose arm and wisdom had preserved our freedom.

Anselmo. Rewards, Adorno! talk not of rewards—
 The man is half a traitor to the state,
 Who only serves it from a fordid motive—
 Yet, if too warm, too rude in my refusal,
 I give offence to any son of Venice,
 Here I abjure th' intention of offending,
 And beg my kind, my too indulgent friends,
 May now disperse, and seek their several homes—
 Who most loves freedom, will keep order most;
 And know, the best way each can serve his country,
 Is to hold tumult in a deep abhorrence,
 And labour closely in his private station.

Adorno. Long live Anselmo—long live great Anselmo.

[Exit Adorno, Citizens, &c.]

Anselmo. [alone.] Lo there—the phrenzy of a nation's virtue!
 Who could abuse their elevated weakness?
 Curse on the despicable slave that could!
 Curse on the slave, however he possesses
 A nation's confidence, whose groveling interest,
 Or abject pride, can tempt him to betray it!
 The more his weight, his merit with a country,
 The more he's bound, by ev'ry tie of honour,

To

To guard the laws; and he's a double villain,
 When once he vilely turns that very power,
 Which he derives from popular esteem,
 To sap the bulwarks of the public freedom.

Enter an Officer.

What means this haste?

Officer. To tell my lord Anselmo,
 That Granville's vessel, which so late you forced
 To sea, has unexpectedly borne back,
 And seems to steer directly for the point
 Which bounds the palace-garden from the surge—

Anselmo. Where is my daughter?—Where is Clementina?
 I've scarcely left a soldier at the palace,
 Sole though it stands, and sep'rate from the city—
 Hence quick, and seize on Granville, if he lands.
 Take ample force—My soul forebodes his purpose— *[Exit Officer.]*
 Yet should he dare—by Heaven's high host he dies—
 No character can sanctify such outrage—
 The laws—the laws shall vindicate themselves,
 And teach the ministers of neighb'ring kings,
 To look for safety, only in their justice. *[Exit.]*

Scene changes to an Apartment in ANSELMO'S Palace.

Enter PALERMO, followed by CLEMENTINA.

Clementina. Nay, for your own sake, give me up, Palermo;
 Give me again my former peace of mind,
 Give me again, my father's dear regards,
 Of which your fatal passion has deprived me:
 O prideless lord! though dead to my repose,
 At least reflect and tremble for your own.
 What joy, what comfort ever can you hope
 From one not only sick'ning at your sight,
 But hear, and fly me—doating on another—
 To madness doating—

Palermo.

Palermo. O, I know it well—
Your once-seen Granville, light capricious beauty!
And seen too, while your plighted vow to me
Was yet all warm, and flying up to Heaven!
For him you trampled on your sacred promise;
For this light Frenchman, in a single moment,
Broke every rosy nicety of sex,
And at a word, a glance—nay, without either—
Lost a whole life of innocence and honour.—

Clementina. Licentious railer—therefore give me up!
Nought but contention, wretchedness, and shame,
Can wait a union circumstanced like ours.
Through life our fiend-like fury to each other,
Must make our home the dwelling of despair;
And after death, our still opposing spirits,
If after death our enmity can live,
With those in story of the Theban brothers,
Will shun all commerce, and as hating here,
Diffuse their hate throughout the whole hereafter.—

Palermo. Swell not the picture with the needless horror,
Nor once imagine that my soul requires
Such striking pleas to shun an obvious baseness—
Think you I mean, persisting in my claim—
To seize a hand that justice bids me scorn;
No: I despise the meanness, and intend
Not to assert my title, but resign it;
I am a lover,—yet I'm still a man;
Acquainted therefore with the blotted mind,
I turn affrighted from the faultless person,
And wed distraction sooner than dishonour.

Clementina. Blest may you be for this exalted scorn,
This noble warmth of manly indignation,
Dearer to me than all the melting strains
Which song e'er fancy'd for protesting love—
My soul is now securely at her ease,
And glows with grateful rev'rence for Palermo.

Palermo.

Palermo. Deem not unjustly, Madam, of my feelings;
 You may betray, but never shall despise me—
 I come no whimperer of a tragic story,
 To shield beneath an angry father's sanction,
 And act the legal ruffian on aversion.
 False, therefore, Clementina, you are free—
 Take back your vows—take your engagements back—
 And though I own this heart must bleed profusely,
 For still, O still your image triumphs here!
 Yet know, I'd sooner tear it from my bosom,
 Than once be rivall'd, in the woman's thought,
 Who made my wife, should think alone for me.

Enter GRANVILLE.

Granville. Where, where is Clementina?

Clementina. Granville again!

Yet here again in danger.

Granville. My love I away—

Fly hence—escape is certain now.

Palermo. [*pushing him away.*] Vile Franc.

Stand off, 'tis death, 'tis death again to touch her—

Granville. Forbear, rash man, to tempt my greedy vengeance.

Wild with my wrongs, its appetites are raging—

There is not now a coward guard to call;

My friends make pris'ners of your paltry force,

And e'er a band superior can arrive;

That lady will be safe on board—Dare not

Therefore, to withstand us—her heart is mine—

So shall her hand be, though your's grasp'd the thunder.

Palermo. Heaven's own red bolt will not be then more deadly—

For know, injurious lord, though I despise

The hand and heart, that can descend so low;

Yet while I wield this sword, my noble friend

Shall not be basely plunder'd of his daughter:

Draw, Granville, boldly then, and prove which arm

Can best protect its master.

Clementina.

Clementina. Hold, O hold
Your dread destructive swords—for my sake, *Granville*;
Plunge not thus in blood—And, O *Palermo*!
If the bright flame of honour fires your soul,
As sure it does from sentiments so noble,
Restrain your rage—The man whose life you seek—

Granville. No more, my *Clementina*—Why entreat
Where we command with absolute dominion?
Without there, friends——

Enter a Party of Guards.

My spirited companions,
Secure that headstrong lord—I join you on the instant.
Treat him, however, with a just respect!
I know him noble, though he is my foe,
And even admire him for his very hatred—

Palermo. Coward, is this your boasted resolution,
Is this the way you dare me to the fight,
And raise your merit with your peerless mistress?

Granville. And thinks *Palermo* that I fear his sword,
Or use this method to elude his fury?
No—once escaped from this oppressive state,
Demand your reparation, and receive it——
The fate of many hangs upon me now,
And honour bids me rather bear you hence,
Than take your life in vengeance for your virtue.
Lead him away.

Palermo. O infamous assassin!
Now more than ever worthy of her heart—
But let your murderers bind me down securely:
For if I once can rush upon your throat,
These hands, unarm'd, shall do a noble vengeance,
And tear you piece-meal, instantly before her.

Granville. Lead him away— [Palermo is carried off.]

Clementina. O say, my dear *Rinaldo*!
Say, while surprise and joy have left me words,

By what blest accident again I see you!
 Heaven sure exhausts its mercy on our heads,
 And all its wonders are reserved for love!

Granville. The time will scarce admit sufficient answer—
 In brief know, therefore, that when torn from hence,
 I heard Anselmo's orders to the troops,
 To line the spacious quarters of St. Mark's;
 Some angel then inspired me with the thought
 Of steering back, and forcing to my love,
 Left now unguarded in a palace, distant
 From instant aid, and dreaming not of danger;
 Th' event, how happy! justified the action.
 My brave attendants caught my honest flame,
 And, Heaven-assisted, easily acquired
 A bloodless conquest o'er your people.

[*A shout without, and a clashing of swords.*]

Clementina. Ha!

What means that shout, this sudden clash of arms?

Granville. Stand firm, my friends; I fly to your support. [Exit.]

Anselmo. [without.] Seize him, seize Granville.

Clementina. O, almighty Heaven!

We're lost again—again undone—

Anselmo. [without.] Palermo,

Send off his bravoos to the common dungeon.

Clementina. Some mountain fall on my devoted head,
 And shield me from the fury of Anselmo!—

My dear Rinaldo! How shall I preserve him!

O! that the daughters of indulgent fires

Could know my sorrows, know my anguish now!

They'd fly from disobedience, and would shudder

In downright prudence, to admit a thought

That madly tended to deceive a father.

Enter ANSELMO, GRANVILLE, Guards, &c.

Anselmo. And now conduct the hero to his prison.

His monarch master, though in prison here,

Should

Should not unpunished violate our laws,
Nor offer such an outrage to Anselmo.

Granville. Why all this pomp of needless preparation!

I know my crime, and dare your instant sentence.

Bring forth your knives, your engines, or your fires—

Next to succeeding in a great attempt,

The generous mind esteems to suffer noblest,

Bring forth your racks then, witness to my triumph,

And be yourself, obdurate Lord, the judge

Which is most brave, the torturer or tortured.

Clementina. Stop not with him—Prepare your racks for me—

I am most guilty, and to Heaven I swear,

Whate'er his fate is, that is Clementina's.

Yet, my dear Granville, if we are to fall,

We'll vindicate our fame; and though offending,

Affert at least the honour of our loves.

Let us inform this venerable chief,

It is a son he hurries to the block,

And that my fancied spoiler is my husband.

Anselmo. Your husband, traitress!—infamous evasion

To varnish o'er your unexampled baseness,

And snatch, if possible, this foreign caitiff,

This foul offender, from the stroke of justice.

Granville. Take heed, reveal not all, my Clementina!

Fate's worst is done, and dying undiscover'd,

Guards those I prize much dearer than my life.

Remember this; and O remember too,

Known, or unknown, that equal death awaits me.

Clementina. My father, hear me—Yes, he is my husband.

However strange, mysterious, or unlikely—

I must no more—But time, a little time,

Will prove it all—Then, gracious Sir, distress

No longer an unhappy pair, whose hands

High Heaven has join'd—Allow the wretched wife

To gain her wedded lord; and judge, O judge,

If aught but this, the first of human duties,
Could tear her thus from Venice and her father.

Anselmo. Your husband—married—when—by whom, and where?
Away, degenerate, infamous deceiver!
Away, and from the scorning world hide quick
That guilty head—Your minion dies this hour—
The next, a cloyster shuts you in for ever.
Take him from hence—

Clementina. And take me with him, guards—

Granville. Unman me not with this excessive softness,
My life's sole joy; but let me meet my fate
As may become a soldier—Where's my dungeon?
Perhaps Anselmo, when a little calmer,
May think my blood sufficient expiation,
And let my guiltless followers escape,
Whose only crime is duty to their leader.
Gracious Heav'n compose her—

[*Bonne off.*]

Clementina. [to the Guards preventing her.] Off—let me go—
Is this a time to drag me from my husband?
Will not his blood suffice your utmost rage,
But must he, in the bitter hour of death,
Lose the poor comforts of a wife's attendance?
Where is the mighty freedom of your state,
Where your strict love of liberty and justice?
Why, say, O why, ye too benignant powers!
Did you from ruin snatch this barbarous realm,
Where even our virtues are considered crimes,
And soft compassion's constituted treason—
Revoke, revoke your merciful decrees;
From your dread stores of everlasting wrath
Hurl instant fury down, and blast those laws
Which talk of freedom, yet enslave the mind,
And boast of wisdom, while they chain our reason!

Anselmo. Blaspheming monster—stop that impious tongue,
Nor thus provoke me longer, to commit

Some

Some dreadful deed of honourable phrenzy :
 Already driven beyond a father's patience,
 I scarce can spare the very life I gave.
 Hence from my sight then, execrable wretch—
 To urge me farther, is to rush on death,
 And add new horrors to the fate of Granville.

Clementina. Do, strike at once—behold my ready bosom—
 Yet spare, Anselmo, my unhappy husband :
 He is not what he seems—O Sir—he is—
 My brain—my brain—When, when shall I have rest ?
 My father, be consistently severe,
 Wreak not this cruel murder on my peace,
 And think that nature sanctifies my person.

Anselmo. He is not what he seems—Declare who is he ?
 How loss of truth attends the loss of honour !
 Abandon'd girl, your arts are all in vain,
 Are all unable to prevent his fate.
 At my request, th' assembling senate now
 Prepare to hear his crime, and will pronounce
 His doom directly—Nay, this wretched tale
 Shall even give vengeance wings—accelerate
 His fall ; and like the dreadful whirlwind, sweep
 Him to destruction. [Exit.]

Clementina. Stay, Anselmo, stay—
 He is—but that is also certain death,
 And I myself prepare the horrid axe
 If I reveal him—Which way shall I act ?
 The lab'ring globe convulsing to its base,
 Is downy softness to my mad'ning bosom !
 I'm all distraction—Reason drops her rein,
 And the next step is dreadful desperation. [Exit.]

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

A C T V.

*Scene, a Prison.**Enter GRANVILLE in Chains.*

Granville. **W**HERE shall I turn—they have me now secure—
 Was I however singled out alone,
 To bear the utmost malice of the stars,
 I could, unshrinking, look upon these chains;
 But when I think what Clementina suffers,
 When to the eye of agonizing fancy,
 I paint my wife all weltring in her blood,
 Or what more deeply damns me in reflection,
 Suppose her dragg'd to hot Palermo's bed;
 My heart faints instantly with apprehension,
 And almost dies at bare imagination;
 Yet, gracious fountain of unbounded mercy!
 Let one blest drop from your exhaustless source,
 In pity fall, and save my Clementina;
 Save her, O! save her in the hour of peril,
 And teach the world that—

Clementina. [within.] Hear me, O Anselmo!

I conjure you hear me—

Granville. She's now in danger—

The slaves now tear their victim to the altar!

She is my wife—Barbarians, hear you that!

These chains—these chains—damnation on these chains—

The prison blazes—Hell yawns quick before me—

Where does this lead? No matter where—Despair

Is prudence now—

[Exit.

Scene

Scene changes to an Apartment in ANSELMO's Palace.

Enter ANSELMO and PALERMO.

Anselmo. And yet, my good Palermo,
My secret soul inclines to hear her too.
O did you mark her undissembled anguish?

Palermo. I did—I did—and felt it most severely—
Her burning eye expanding into blood,
Stood desperately fix'd, while on each cheek,
Each pallid cheek, a single tear hung quiv'ring,
Like early dew-drops on the sickening lily,
And spoke a mind just verging into madness.

Anselmo. I'll see her once again—for when I weigh
All the nice strictness of her former conduct;
When I reflect, that to this cursed day,
She look'd, as if her person, wholly mind,
In Dian's breast could raise a sigh of envy,
I cannot think her utterly abandon'd:
Abandon'd too, in such a little space!
Despise me not, Palermo—for the father
Still rushes strongly on my aching heart,
And fondly seeks for argument to save her.

Palermo. Check not the tender sentiments of nature,
But see her—make her, if possible, disclose
Who Granville truly is, since she affirms
He is not what he seems, and is her husband—
That he's a Frenchman, and of noble rank,
Appears too plainly from his high commission—
But still some secret strongly heaves her soul;
And hid beneath this mystery of woe,
Who knows how far that secret may not merit
Compassion or excuse—

Anselmo. I'll try at least—
I'll act as fits the fondness of a father;
Forgive as far as honour can forgive,
And if her guilt exceeds a father's mercy,
I'll beg of Heaven the firmness of a man—

[Exit.
Palermo.]

Palermo. Unhappy, generous, excellent old man,
I could not quench his little ray of hope,
And tell him all I thought of Clementina.
She is indeed distressed—But pride alone,
A disappointed pride, and lawless love,
Now harrow up her soul—Had she an honest,
Rational excuse—a tale that could behold—
The light—ere now she had discover'd it—
This seeming mystery is wholly art,
To save this new-made husband—Monstrous—monstrous!
Shame rises upon shame, and each fresh guilt
Out-damns the former, with its deepening blackness—

Enter GRANVILLE bursting from the back Scene.

Granville. I've forced a way—Infernal villain, turn!
Chain'd as I am, you shall not fly me now.

Palermo. Why this exceeds my utmost expectation—
This is revenge that pays an age of torture.
Yes, fraudulent lord, this meeting gives me transport;
And long ere now my vengeance had you felt,
But that the perjur'd partner of your crimes
Appear'd most guilty, and to justice seem'd
Less the seduced, than infamous seducer—

Granville. Talk not of justice, O consummate coward!
Talk not of justice, little-minded spoiler!
When, dead alike to sentiment and shame,
You seek by force—by force, inhuman ruffian!
To drag a helpless woman to your bed;
And tho' despis'd—detested—execrated—
Attempt, assisted by her savage father,
To make her yours, thro' actual rape and murder.

Palermo. Ere I reply to this injurious charge,
Let me, tho' fate hangs o'er your guilty head,
On equal terms, allow you room to answer.
Here I unloose your chains—Now hence with me,
And fight the cause of this abandon'd woman.

Palermo dares you forth to single combat:
 Palermo too, shall arm his vanquish'd foe,
 Nor ev'n, while Venice dooms him to the axe,
 Once name his crimes, to shun the claims of honour—

Granville. Hence—With the promis'd sword alone I'll answer;
 For tho' my soul thro' all her enmity,
 Feels a kind something for this gallant anger,
 In blood alone she'll speak her obligation. *[Exit.]*

Scene changes to a Chamber.

Enter CLEMENTINA.

Clementina. He'll see me—endless blessings on his head—
 Yes—Elizara's counsel was most just:
 There is no other way to save my husband—
 If I persist in hiding who he is,
 He dies beyond a doubt—whereas revealing
 The fatal secret, tho' replete with horror,
 May wake the father in Anselmo's bosom;
 And when he finds his daughter still unfulled,
 The sudden torrent of surprize and joy,
 May lead him yet to pity and forgiveness—

Enter ANSELMO.

Anselmo. I come at last, unhappy girl, to hear
 If there's indeed, in this mysterious conduct,
 Aught that can have pretensions to excuse?
 I come ev'n hoping ardently for motives
 To justify an offer of my pardon;
 For O! I wish, I wish to find you guiltless—
 Speak then at once, I earnestly conjure you:
 Give me but room to exercise my fondness,
 And come again securely to my heart—

Clementina. O Sir! restrain, restrain this wond'rous goodness!
 It pierces like a dagger thro' my heart—
 And shews me doubly, what a wretch I was
 To wrong so good, so excellent a father.

D d

Had

Had I at first reveal'd my wretched story—
Had I but said who Granville truly is,
I see, 'twere possible to hope for pity.

Anselmo. Deserve that pity, and receive it now—
Prove that you are not lost—prove that this Granville
Is not the vile seducer of an instant.
Shew me but this—and leave a partial father,
If you can wipe away the charge of shame,
To overlook the crime of disobedience.

Clementina. How could I be a monster so depraved,
As once to forfeit tenderness like this!
O Sir—if you can graciously forgive
One fault—one fatal fault—wretch as I am,
We may be happy yet; and long, long days
Of future joy o'erpay these hours of sorrow—
Know then that Granville—

Anselmo. Well.

Clementina. Is not of France.

Anselmo. Proceed.

Clementina. He is a citizen of Venice—

Anselmo. What citizen?

Clementina. Rinaldo—

Anselmo. Ha! confusion!

Son of my foe—nay more, a foe to freedom!

Clementina. He's not your foe, Sir, not a foe to freedom.
I need not mention how he fought for Venice;
You saw him fall, and saw his country weep:
A train of wonderful events has since
High-raised him in the court of France, and duty
To an indulgent, to a royal master,
Join'd with his wishes to behold your daughter,
Has led him to this dang'rous embassy:
O save him then, my father—I know well
His life is forfeit to the laws—But surely
As your unequal'd virtue has preserved
The state, the state will readily preserve
Your hapless son.

Anselmo.

Anselmo. 'Tis hard, 'tis hard at once
To conquer our resentments—Hard to take
Those to our hearts, whom we have hated deadly :
But 'tis such bliss to find you still unspotted,
That what before had fired my soul to madness,
Brings rapture now, and cancels disobedience.

Clementina. How shall I speak the feelings of my heart !
How, sacred Sir, repay this wond'rous goodness :

Anselmo. I have a daughter still—Rinaldo never
Was lost to worth, tho' I abhorr'd his father ;
Nor shall his country, for this first transgression,
Forget the merit of his former service.
Now you're my child again—your husband lives ;
Thus, thus I bury your offence for ever, [Embracing her.
And fly to bring Rinaldo to your arms. [Exit.

Clementina. O teach me, Heaven ! O teach me to express
The strong sensations of my swelling bosom !
Do not oppress me with this weight of mercy,
And yet destroy my feeble power to thank you :
But my Rinaldo, my deliver'd lord,
Shall speak our mutual praise—Joy, boundless joy—
And gratitude absorb my little sense
Beyond the reach of recollection—and
Transport grows too exquisite for words.

*Enter GRANVILLE, leaning on his Sword, pale and bloody : entering
he falls against the side of the Scene, where he continues some time.*

Clementina. My husband—horror—wilt'ring in his blood !
O who has rais'd his arm against your life ?

Granville. Behold I come ev'n in the pangs—support me,
Clementina—of death to save my love,
To prove my right—and guard her from dishonour.

Clementina. Ye heavenly ministers,—O say if this,
If this is all my happiness at last !

Granville. My *Clementina*—But it will not be—
The hand of fate is on me—and Palermo

Triumphs after all—O had I given him
Blow for blow—I cou'd enjoy these pangs—But
Thus, thus to fall—

[Falling down, Clementina kneeling over him.]

Clementina. Well now what farther business
Have I with life?—

Granville. My dearest Clementina!

Clementina. What says my love?

Granville. They have not yet undone you?

Clementina. Am I not yet alive—let that convince you—

Anselmo too is reconciled—And O!

I look'd for years, for long, long years of joy:

But what is reconciliation now?

Or what is joy?—From dreams of heav'n I wake,

To added woe, to aggravated torture—

And must we part, Rinaldo?

Granville. O, for ever!

Life ebbs apace, and all is darkness round me,

Save Clementina—Save my gallant friends—

They're yours—my father too—farewel! One look,

One last dear look—farewel—farewel for ever. [Dies.]

Clementina. Here too my fun eternally shall set—

Rinaldo—friend—companion—lover—husband—

Hard as our doom is, it is kind in this,

And joins us now, to sever us no more!

Enter ANSELMO.

Anselmo. Palermo has acquainted me with all—

And is he gone so soon!—O hapless girl!

But yet Palermo's not to blame—Rinaldo

Provoked his fate—He urged him to the combat,

And the survivor, conscious who has fall'n,

Deplores most deeply the disastrous blow.

Clementina. Hence with his more than crocodile complaining,

Hence, to th' inferior monster of the Nile,

Let him teach tears of yet unfancy'd falsehood—

There

There lies my husband slaughter'd by his hand,
 Heaven's worst of woes—Heaven's worst of woes upon him!
 And thinks he now with sounds of lamentation,
 To charm down griefs of magnitude like mine?
 No, here I shake off wretchedness and life;
 Here I attend my dear Rinaldo's spirit,
 And leave the world to beings like Palermo. *[Stabs herself.]*

Anselmo. O Clementina—O my child—my child!
 Had you no pity for a weeping father?
 Was I not curs'd enough, enough a wretch,
 Without this blow to rend my breast asunder!

Clementina. I scarce know what I act—my reason totters;
 Yet while an interval of sense remains,
 O see me, Sir, with less endearing goodness—
 Wretched no less as daughter than as wife:
 In life's decline I mark you out to woe,
 And here I murder my unhappy husband:
 'Tis time the grave should hide so foul a monster!
 My brain, my brain, my brain—Who's that—Palermo— *[Raving.]*
 Again—There, savage—there, that blow is ample vengeance—
 Look down—look down, Rinaldo—see your wife!
 There lies the murderer slain by Clementina!
 Prepare to meet my spirit in the skies!
 Prepare to meet me in eternal morning!
 Elysium spreads upon my raptur'd view,
 And I die blest, since dying I revenge you— *[Sinks.]*

Anselmo. O when I cast a retrospective glance
 On all the graces of her infant years;
 When I reflect how, rip'ning into beauty,
 My eager eyes would strain in transport on her,
 Her faults, her follies vanish from my view,
 And nought remains but tenderness to torture.

Clementina. Where am I?—O I shall remember soon
 That is Anselmo—that my rev'rend father:
 O Sir, forgive me—beg down mercy on me!
 And in the grave unite me to Rinaldo. *[Dies.]*
Anselmo.

Anselmo. She's gone—she's gone; my lily there lies blasted.
 No more to know returning spring—no more
 To blossom in the pride of beauty.—Where,
 Where shall I fly to lose my recollection?
 The world is now detestable to thought,
 Since all that once delighted me is lost.
 O wretched child—O miserable father!
 But let me not blaspheme; good Heaven—good Heaven!
 I yield submissive to the dreadful stroke,
 And only ask that this unhappy story,
 To future times, may forcibly point out
 The dire effects of filial disobedience. [Exit.]

END OF THE FIFTH ACT.

EPILOGUE.

BY GEORGE COLMAN, Esq.

SPOKEN BY MRS. YATES.

FROM Otway's and immortal Shakespeare's page

Venice is grown familiar to our stage.

Here the Rialto often has display'd

At once a bridge, a street, a mart of trade;

Here, treason threatening to lay Venice flat,

Grave candle-snuffers oft in Senate sat.

To-night in Venice we have plac'd our scene,

Where I have been—lived—died—as you have seen.

Yet, that my travels I may not disgrace,

Let me—since now revived—describe the place!

Nor would the Tour of Europe prove our shame,

Could every Macaroni do the same.

The City's self—a wonder, all agree—

Appears to spring, like Venus, from the sea.

Founded on piles, it rises from the strand,

Like Trifle placed upon a silver stand:

While many a lesser isle the prospect crowns,

Looking like sugar-plums, or floating towns.

Horses and mules ne'er pace the narrow street,

Where crowded walkers elbow all they meet:

No carts and coaches o'er the pavement clatter;

Ladies, Priests, Lawyers, Nobles,—go by water:

Light boats and gondolas transport them all,

Like one eternal party to Vauxhall.

Now hey for merriment!—hence grief and fear!

The jolly Carnival leads in the year;

*Calls the young Loves and Pleasures to its aid;
 A three-months jubilee and masquerade!
 With gaiety the throng'd piazza glows,
 Mountebanks, jugglers, boxers, puppet-shows:
 Mask'd and disguis'd the ladies meet their sparks,
 While Venus bails the mummers of St. Mark's
 There holy friars turn gallants, and there too
 Nuns yield to all the frailties—"Flesh is heir to."
 There dear Ridottos constantly delight,
 And sweet Harmonic Meetings every night!*

*Once in each year the Doge ascends his barge,
 Fine as a London Mayor's, and thrice as large;
 Throws a huge ring of gold into the sea,
 And cries—"Thus We, thy Sovereign, marry thee.
 "Oh may'st thou ne'er, like many a mortal spouse,
 "Prove full of storms, and faithless to thy vows!"*

*One word of politics—and then I've done—
 The state of Venice Nobles rule alone.
 Thrice happy Britain, where with equal hand
 Three well-pois'd states unite to rule the land!
 Thus in the theatre, as well as state,
 Three ranks must join to make us bless'd and great.
 King, Lords, and Commons, o'er the nation sit;
 Pit, Box, and Gallery, rule the realms of wit.*

THE

SCHOOL FOR WIVES:

C O M M E D Y.

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THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES,

BEING A COMEDY IN WHICH THE LADIES
ARE PARTICULARLY INTERESTED,
IT SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO THE FIRST
ORNAMENT OF THE SEX;

AND IS THEREFORE INSCRIBED WITH
THE HIGHEST ADMIRATION AND
THE MOST PROFOUND
REVERENCE,

T O H E R M A J E S T Y;

NOT BECAUSE SHE IS THE GREATEST
O F Q U E E N S,
BUT BECAUSE, IN THE Milder AND
MORE ENDEARING RELATIONS
O F L F I E,

SHE IS THE BRIGHTEST PATTERN
O F ALL THE FEMALE VIRTUES.

January 1, 1774

THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES

BEING A COMEDY IN WHICH THE LADIES

ARE PARTICULARLY INTERESTED

SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO THE FIRST

ORNAMENT OF THE SEX;

AND IS THEREFORE INSCRIBED WITH

THE HIGHEST ADMIRATION AND

THE MOST PROFOUND

REVERENCE,

TO HER MAJESTY

NOT BECAUSE SHE IS THE GREATEST

OF QUEENS

BUT BECAUSE IN THE MIDDLE AND

MORE REMARKABLE RELATIONS

OF LIFE

SHE IS THE BRIGHTEST PATTERN

OF ALL THE FEMALE VIRTUES

But though the Author of the School for Wives prides greatly in all the changes, still, in extenuation of his offence, he begs leave to observe that having only men and women to introduce upon the stage, he was obliged to compose his Dramatis Personae of mere flesh and blood. However, he has shewn this belief, and placed his characters in a point of view, he has given a new fabric, and placed his characters in a point of view.

P R E F A C E.

THE Author of the following performance cannot commit it to the press, without acknowledging the deepest sense of gratitude, for the uncommon marks of approbation with which he has been honoured by the Public.

Though he has chosen a title used by Moliere, he has neither borrowed a single circumstance from that great poet, nor, to the best of his recollection, from any other writer.—His chief study has been to steer between the extremes of sentimental gloom, and the excesses of uninteresting levity; he has some laugh, yet he hopes he has also some lesson; and, as fashionable as it has been lately for the wits, even with his friend Mr. Garrick at their head, to ridicule the Comic Muse, when a little grave, he must think that she degenerates into farce, where the grand business of instruction is neglected, and consider it as a heresy in criticism, to say that one of the most arduous tasks within the reach of literature, should, when executed, be wholly without utility.

The author having been presumptuous enough to assert, that he has not purloined a single sprig of bays from the brow of any other writer, he may perhaps be asked, if there are not several plays in the English language, which, before his, produced Generals, Lawyers, Irishmen, Duels, Masquerades, and Mistakes? He answers, yes; and confesses moreover, that all the Comedies before his, were composed not only of men and women, but that, before his, the great business of comedy consisted in making difficulties for the purpose of removing them; in distressing poor young lovers; and in rendering a happy marriage the object of every catastrophe.

Yet though the Author of the School for Wives pleads guilty to all these charges, still, in extenuation of his offence, he begs leave to observe, that having only men and women to introduce upon the stage, he was obliged to compose his *Dramatis Personæ* of mere flesh and blood; if, however, he has thrown this flesh and this blood into *new* situations; if he has given a *new* fable, and placed his characters in a point of light
hitherto

hitherto unexhibited—he flatters himself that he may call his play, a *new* play; and though it did not exist before the creation of the world, like the famous Welch pedigree, that he may have some small pretensions to originality.

Two things, beside the general moral inculcated through his piece, the Author has attempted; the first, to rescue the law, as a profession, from ridicule or obloquy; and the second, to remove the imputation of a barbarous ferocity, which dramatic writers, even meaning to compliment the Irish nation, have connected with their idea of that gallant people.—The law, like every other profession, may have members who occasionally disgrace it; but, to the glory of the British name, it is well known that, in the worst of times, it has produced numbers whose virtues reflected honour upon human nature; many of the noblest privileges the constitution has to boast of, were derived from the integrity, or the wisdom of lawyers: Yet the stage has hitherto cast an indiscriminate stigma upon the whole body, and laboured to make that profession either odious or contemptible in the theatre, which, if the laws are indeed dear to good Englishmen, can never be too much respected in this kingdom. There is scarcely a play in which a lawyer is introduced, that is not a libel upon the long robe; and so ignorant have many dramatic writers been, that they have made no distinction whatever between the characters of the first barristers in Westminster-Hall, and the meanest solicitors at the Old Bailey.

With respect to the gentlemen of Ireland, where even an absolute attempt is manifested to place them in a favourable point of view, they are drawn with a brutal promptitude to quarrel, which is a disgrace to the well-known humanity of their country.—The gentlemen of Ireland have doubtless a quick sense of honour, and, like the gentlemen of England, as well as like the gentlemen of every other high-spirited nation, are perhaps unhappily too ready to draw the sword, where they conceive themselves injured—But to make them proud of a barbarous propensity to duelling, to make them actually delight in the effusion of blood, is to fasten a very unjust reproach upon their general character, and to render them universally obnoxious to society. The Author of *The School for Wives*, therefore, has given a different picture of Irish manners, though in humble life, and flatters himself that those who are
really

really acquainted with the original, will acknowledge it to be at least a tolerable resemblance.

It would be ungrateful in the highest degree to close this preface, without acknowledging the very great obligations which the Author has to Mr. Garrick. Every attention, which, either as a manager, or as a man, he could give to the interest of the following play, he has bestowed with the most generous alacrity; but, universally admired as he is at present, his intrinsic value will not be known, till his loss is deplored; and the public have great reason to wish, that this may be a very distant event in the annals of the theatre. The Epilogue sufficiently marks the masterly hand from which it originated; so does the comic commencement of the Prologue, and the elegant writer of the graver part, is a character of distinguished eminence in the literary republic.

It has been remarked with great justice, that few new pieces were ever better performed than *The School for Wives*. Mr. King, that highly-deserving favourite of the Town, was every thing the Author could possibly wish in General Savage. Mr. Reddish acquired a very considerable share of merited reputation in Belville. Mr. Moody is unequalled in his Irishman. Mr. Palmer, from his manner of supporting Leeson, was entitled to a much better part: And Mr. Weston in Torrington was admirable. Miss Younge, in Mrs. Belville, extorted applause from the coldest auditor. Her tenderness—her force—her pathos, were the true effusions of genius, and proved that she has no superior where the feelings are to be interested. With respect to Mrs. Abington, enough can never be said. The elegance, the vivacity, the critical nicety with which she went through Miss Walsingham, is only to be guessed at by those who are familiar with the performance of that exquisite actress. Her Epilogue was delivered with an animation not to be conceived, and manifested the strict propriety, with which she is called the first priestess of the Comic Muse in this country.

Jan. 1, 1774.

P R O-

P R O L O G U E.

SPOKEN BY MR. KING.

NO coward he, who in this critic age,
Dares set his foot upon the dang'rous stage;
These boards, like Ice, your footing will betray,
Who can tread sure upon a slipp'ry way?
Yet some through five acts slide with wondrous skill,
Skim swift along, turn, stop, or wind at will!
Some tumble, and get up; some rise no more;
While cruel critics watch them on the shore,
And at each stumble make a hellish roar!
A wise Philosopher hath truly noted,
(His name I have forgot, though often quoted)
That fine-spun spirits from the slightest cause,
Draw to themselves affliction, or applause:
So fares it with our Bard.—Last week he meets
Some hawkers, roaring up and down the streets,
Lives, character, behaviour, parentage,
Of some who lately left the mortal stage!
His ears so caught the sound, and work'd his mind,
He thought his own name floated in the wind;
As thus—"Here is a faithful, true relation,
"Of the birth, parentage, and education,
"Last dying speech, confession, character,
"Of the unhappy malefactorer,
"And Comic poet, Thomas Addle Brain!
"Who suffer'd Monday last at Drury Lane;
"All for the price of half-penny a-piece;"
Still in his ears those horrid sounds encrease!
Try'd and condemn'd, half executed too,
There stands the culprit; 'till reprieved by you.

[going.
Enter

Enter Miss YOUNGE.

Miss Younge. *Pray give me leave—I've something now to say.*

Mr. King. *Is't at the School for Wives, you're taught this way?*
The School for Husbands teaches to obey. [Exit.

Miss Younge. *It is a shame, good Sirs, that brother King,
 To joke and laughter should turn every thing.
 Our frighted poet would have no denial,
 But begs me to say something on his trial:
 The School for Wives, as it to us belongs,
 Should for our use be guarded with our tongues.
 Ladies, prepare, arm well your brows and eyes,
 From those your thunder, these your lightning flies.
 Should storms be rising in the Pit—look down,
 And still the waves thus, fair ones, with a frown:
 Or should the Galleries for war declare;
 Look up—your eyes will carry twice as far.
 * Our Bard, to noble triumphs points your way,
 Bids you in moral principles be gay;
 Something he'd alter in your education,
 Something which hurting you, would hurt a nation.
 Ingenuous natures wish you to reclaim?
 By smiling virtue you'll insure your aim:
 That gilds with bliss the matrimonial hours,
 And blends her laurels with the sweetest flowers.
 Ye married fair! deign to attend our school,
 And without usurpation learn to rule:
 Soon will he cease mean objects to pursue,
 In conscience wretched till he lives to you;
 Your charms will reformation's pain beguile
 And vice receive a stab from every smile.*

* The conclusion of the Prologue from this line is by another hand.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

General SAVAGE,
BELVILLE,
TORRINGTON,
LEESON,
Captain SAVAGE,
CONNOLLY,
SPRUCE,
GHASTLY,
LEECH,
CROW,
WOLF,

Mr. King.
Mr. Reddiss.
Mr. Weston.
Mr. Palmer.
Mr. Brereton.
Mr. Moody.
Mr. Baddeley.
Mr. W. Palmer.
Mr. Bransby.
Mr. Wright.
Mr. Ackman.

W O M E N.

Miss WALSINGHAM,
Mrs. BELVILLE,
Lady RACHEL MILDEW,
Mrs. TEMPEST,
Miss LEESON,
MAID,

Mrs. Abington.
Miss Younge.
Mrs. Hopkins.
Mrs. Greville.
Miss Jarrat.
Mrs. Millidge.

T H E

THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES:

A
C O M E D Y.

A C T I.

SCENE, *an Apartment at BELVILLE'S.*

Enter Captain SAVAGE, and Miss WALSHINGHAM.

Capt. **H**A! ha! ha! Well, Miss Walshingham this fury is going;
what a noble peal she has rung in Belville's ears!

Miss Wal. Did she see you, Captain Savage?

Capt. No, I took care of that; for though she is'n't married to my father, she has ten times the influence of a wife, and might injure me not a little with him, if I didn't support her side of the question.

Miss Wal. It was a pleasant conceit of Mr. Belville, to insinuate the poor woman was disordered in her senses!—

Capt. And did you observe how the termagant's violence of temper supported the probability of the charge?

Miss Wal. Yes, she became almost frantic in reality, when she found herself treated like a madwoman.

Capt. Belville's affected surprise too, was admirable!

Miss Wal. Yes, the hypocritical composure of his countenance, and his counterfeit pity for the poor woman, were intolerable!

Capt. While that amiable creature, his wife, implicitly believed every syllable he said—

Miss Wal. And felt nothing but pity for the accuser, instead of paying the least regard to the accusation. But pray, is it really under a

pretence of getting the girl upon the stage, that Belville has taken away Mrs. Tempest's niece from the people she boarded with?

Capt. It is: Belville, ever on the look-out for fresh objects, met her in those primitive regions of purity, the Green-Boxes; where, discovering that she was passionately desirous of becoming an actress, he improved his acquaintance with her, in the fictitious character of an Irish manager, and she eloped last night, to be, as she imagines, the heroine of a Dublin theatre.

Miss Wal. So, then, as he has kept his real name artfully concealed, Mrs. Tempest can at most but suspect him of Miss Leeson's seduction.

Capt. Of no more! and this only from the description of the people who saw him in company with her at the play; but I wish the affair may not have a serious conclusion; for she has a brother, a very spirited young fellow, who is a counsel in the Temple, and who will certainly call Belville to an account, the moment he hears of it.

Miss Wal. And what will become of the poor creature after he has deserted her?

Capt. You know that Belville is generous to profusion, and has a thousand good qualities to counterbalance this single fault of gallantry, which contaminates his character.

Miss Wal. You men! you men!—You are such wretches that there's no having a moment's satisfaction with you! and what is still more provoking, there's no having a moment's satisfaction without you!

Capt. Nay, don't think us all alike.

Miss Wal. I'll endeavour to deceive myself; for it is but a poor argument of your sincerity, to be the confidant of another's falsehood.

Capt. Nay, no more of this, my love; no people live happier than Belville and his wife; nor is there a man in England, notwithstanding all his levity, who considers his wife with a warmer degree of affection: if you have a friendship, therefore, for her, let her continue in an error so necessary to her repose, and give no hint whatever of his gallantries to any body.

Miss Wal. If I had no pleasure in obliging you, I have too much regard for Mrs. Belville, not to follow your advice; but you need not enjoin me so strongly on the subject, when you know I can keep a secret.

+

Capt.

Capt. You are all goodness; and the prudence with which you have conceal'd our private engagements, has eternally obliged me; had you trusted the secret even to Mrs. Belville, it wouldn't have been safe; she would have told her husband, and he is such a rattleskul, that, notwithstanding all his regard for me, he wou'd have mentioned it in some moment of levity, and sent it in a course of circulation to my father.

Miss Wal. The peculiarity of your father's temper, joined to my want of fortune, made it necessary for me to keep our engagements inviolably secret; there is no merit, therefore, either in my prudence, or in my labouring assiduously to cultivate the good opinion of the General, since both were so necessary to my own happiness; don't despise me for this acknowledgment now.

Capt. Bewitching softness!—But your goodness, I flatter myself, will be speedily rewarded; you are now such a favourite with him, that he is eternally talking of you; and I really fancy he means to propose you to me himself: for, last night, in a few minutes after he had declared you would make the best wife in the world, he seriously asked me if I had any aversion to matrimony?

Miss Wal. Why, that was a very great concession indeed, as he seldom stoops to consult any body's inclinations.

Capt. So it was, I assure you; for, in the army, being used to nothing but command and obedience, he removes the discipline of the parade into his family, and no more expects his orders should be disputed, in matters of a domestic nature, than if they were delivered at the head of his regiment.

Miss Wal. And yet Mrs. Tempest, who you say is as much a storm in her nature as her name, is disputing them eternally.

Enter Mr. and Mrs. BELVILLE.

Bel. Well, Miss Walsingham, haven't we had a pretty morning's visitor?

Miss Wal. Really, I think so; and I have been asking Captain Savage, how long the lady has been disordered in her senses?

Bel. Why will they let the poor woman abroad without somebody to take care of her?

Capt. O, she has her lucid intervals!

Miss Wal. I declare I shall be as angry with you as I am with Belville. [*Aside to the Captain.*

Mrs. Bel. You can't think how sensibly she spoke at first.

Bel. I should have had no conception of her madness, if she hadn't brought so preposterous a charge against me.

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Lady Rachel Mildew, Madam, sends her compliments, and if you are not particularly engaged, will do herself the pleasure of waiting upon you.

Mrs. Bel. Our compliments, and we shall be glad to see her ladyship. [*Ex. Servant.*

Bel. I wonder if Lady Rachel knows that Torrington came to town last night from Bath!

Mrs. Bel. I hope he has found benefit by the waters, for he is one of the best creatures existing; he's a downright parson Adams, in good-nature and simplicity.

Miss Wal. Lady Rachel will be quite happy at his return, and it would be a laughable affair, if a match could be brought about between the old maid and the old bachelor.

Capt. Mr. Torrington is too much taken up at Westminster Hall, to think of paying his devoirs to the ladies, and too plain a speaker, I fancy, to be agreeable to lady Rachel.

Bel. You mistake the matter widely; she is deeply smitten with him; but honest Torrington is utterly unconscious of his conquest, and modestly thinks that he has not a single attraction for any woman in the universe.

Mrs. Bel. Yet my poor aunt speaks sufficiently plain, in all conscience, to give him a different opinion of himself.

Miss Wal. Yes, and puts her charms into such repair, whenever she expects to meet him, that her cheeks look for all the world like a raspberry ice upon a ground of custard.

Capt. I thought *Apollo* was the only god of Lady Rachel's idolatry, and that in her passion for poetry she had taken leave of all the less elevated affections.

Bel.

Bel. O, you mistake again! the poets are eternally in love, and can by no means be calculated to describe the imaginary passions, without being very susceptible of the real ones.

Enter Servant.

Ser. The man, Madam, from Tavistock-street, has brought home the dresses for the masquerade, and desires to know if there are any commands for him.

Mrs. Bel. O, bid him stay till we see the dresses. [*Exit Servant.*]

Miss Wal. They are only Dominos.

Bel. I am glad of that; for characters are as difficult to be supported at the masquerade, as they are in real life. The last time I was at the Pantheon, a Vestal Virgin invited me to sup with her, and swore that her pocket had been picked by a Justice of Peace.

Miss Wal. Nay, that was not so bad, as the Hamlet's Ghost that box'd with Henry the Eighth, and afterwards danced a hornpipe to the tune of Nancy Dawson. Ha! ha! ha!—We follow you, Mrs. Belville.

Scene changes to LEESON'S Chambers in the Temple.

Enter LEESON.

Lees. Where is this clerk of mine! Connolly?

Con. [*behind*] Here, Sir!

Lees. Have you copied the marriage-settlement, as I corrected it?

Con. [*enters with pistols*] Ay, honey, an hour ago.

Lees. What, you have been trying those pistols?

Con. By my soul I have been firing them this half hour, without once being able to make them go off.

Lees. They are plaguy dirty.

Con. In troth, so they are; I strove to brighten them up a little, but some misfortune attends every thing I do, for the more I clean them, the dirtier they are, honey.

Lees. You have had some of your usual daily visitors for money, I suppose.

Con. You may say that! and three or four of them are now hanging about the door, that I wish handsomely hang'd any where else for bodering us.

Leef. No joking, Connolly! my present situation is a very disagreeable one.

Con. Faith, and so it is; but who makes it disagreeable? your aunt Tempest would let you have as much money as you please, but you won't condescend to be acquainted with her, though people in this country can be very intimate friends, without seeing one another's faces for seven years.

Leef. Do you think me base enough to receive a favour from a woman, who has disgraced her family, and stoops to be a kept mistress? you see, my sister is already ruin'd by a connection with her.

Con. Ah, Sir, a good guinea isn't the worse for coming through a bad hand; if it was, what would become of us lawyers? and by my soul, many a high head in London would, at this minute, be very low, if they hadn't received favours even from much worse people than kept mistresses.

Leef. Others, Connolly, may prostitute their honour, as they please; mine is my chief possession, and I must take particular care of it.

Con. Honour, to be sure, is a very fine thing, Sir; but I don't see how it is to be taken care of, without a little money; your honour to my knowledge, hasn't been in your own possession these two years, and the devil a crum can you honestly swear by, till you get it out of the hands of your creditors.

Leef. I have given you a licence to talk, Connolly, because I know you faithful; but I ha'n't given you a liberty to sport with my misfortunes.

Con. You know I'd die to serve you, Sir; but of what use is your giving me leave to spake, if you oblige me to hould my tongue? 'tis out of pure love and affection that I put you in mind of your misfortunes.

Leef. Well, Connolly, a few days will, in all probability, enable me to redeem my honour, and to reward your fidelity; the lovely Emily, you know, has half-consented to embrace the first opportunity of flying with me to Scotland, and the paltry trifles I owe, will not be miss'd in her fortune.

Con. But, dear Sir, consider you are going to fight a duel this very evening, and if you shou'd be kilt, I fancy you will find it a little difficult to ride away afterwards with the lovely Emily.

Leef.

Leef. If I fall, there will be an end to my misfortunes.

Con. But surely it will not be quite genteel, to go out of the world without paying your debts.

Leef. But how shall I stay in the world, Connolly, without punishing Belville for ruining my sister?

Con. O, the devil fly away with this honour; an ounce of common sense, is worth a whole ship load of it, if we must prefer a bullet or a halter to a fine young lady and a great fortune.

Leef. We'll talk no more on the subject at present. Take this letter to Mr. Belville; deliver it into his own hand, be sure; and bring me an answer: make haste, for I shall not stir out till you come back.

Con. By my soul, I wish you may be able to stir out then—O, but that's true!

Leef. What's the matter?

Con. Why, Sir, the gentleman I last lived clerk with, died lately, and left me a legacy of twenty guineas—

Leef. What! is Mr. Stanley dead?

Con. Faith his friends have behaved very unkindly if he is not, for they have buried him these six weeks.

Leef. And what then?

Con. Why, Sir, I have received my little legacy this morning, and if you'd be so good as to keep it for me, I'd be much obliged to you.

Leef. Connolly, I understand you, but I am already shamefully in your debt: you've had no money from me this age—

Con. O Sir, that does not signify; if you are not kilt in this damn'd duel, you'll be able enough to pay me: if you are, I sha'n't want it.

Leef. Why so, my poor fellow?

Con. Because, tho' I am but your clerk, and tho' I think fighting the most foolish thing upon earth, I'm as much a gentleman as yourself, and have as much right to commit a murder in the way of duelling.

Leef. And what then? You have no quarrel with Mr. Belville!

Con. I shall have a damn'd quarrel with him tho' if you are kilt: your death shall be revenged, depend upon it, so let that content you.

Leef. My dear Connolly, I hope I sha'n't want such a proof of your affection.—How he distresses me!

Con. You will want a second, I suppose, in this affair: I stood second to my own brother in the Fifteen Acres, and tho' that has made me detest the very thought of duelling ever since; yet if you want a friend, I'll attend you to the field of death with a great deal of satisfaction.

Leef. I thank you, Connolly, but I think it extremely wrong in any man who has a quarrel, to expose his friend to difficulties; we shou'dn't seek for redress, if we are not equal to the task of fighting our own battles; and I choose you particularly to carry my letter, because you may be supposed ignorant of the contents, and thought to be acting only in the ordinary course of your business.

Con. Say no more about it, honey; I will be back with you presently. (*Going, returns.*) I put the twenty guineas in your pocket, before you were up, Sir; and I don't believe you'd look for such a thing there, if I wasn't to tell you of it. [*Exit.*]

Leef. This faithful noble hearted creature!—but let me fly from thought; the business I have to execute will not bear the test of reflection. [*Exit.*]

Re-enter CONNOLLY.

Con. As this is a challenge, I shou'dnt go without a sword; come down, little tickle-pitcher. [*Takes a sword.*] Some people may think me very conceited now; but as the dirtiest black-legs in town can wear one without being stared at, I don't think it can suffer any disgrace by the side of an honest man. [*Exit.*]

S C E N E changes to an Apartment at BELVILLE'S.

Enter Mrs. BELVILLE.

Mrs. Bel. How strangely this affair of Mrs. Tempest hangs upon my spirits, tho' I have every reason, from the tenderness, the politeness, and the generosity of Mr. Belville, as well as from the woman's behaviour, to believe the whole charge the result of a disturbed imagination.—Yet suppose it should be actually true:—heigho!—well, suppose it shou'd;—I wou'd endeavour—I think I wou'd endeavour to keep my temper:—a frowning face never recovered a heart that was not to be fixed

fixed with a smiling one:—but women in general forget this grand article of the matrimonial creed entirely; the dignity of insulted virtue obliges them to play the fool, whenever their Corydons play the libertine; and poh! they must pull down the house about the traitor's ears, though they are themselves to be crushed in pieces by the ruins.

Enter a Servant.

Ser. Lady Rachael Mildew, madam.

[Exit Ser.]

Enter Lady RACHAEL MILDEW.

Lady Rach. My dear, how have you done since the little eternity of my last seeing you. Mr. Torrington is come to town, I hear.

Mrs. Bel. He is, and must be greatly flattered to find that your Ladyship has made him the hero of your new comedy.

Lady Rach. Yes, I have drawn him as he is, an honest practitioner of the law; which is, I fancy, no very common character—

Mrs. Bel. And it must be a vast acquisition to the theatre.

Lady Rach. Yet the managers of both houses have refused my play; have refused it peremptorily! though I offered to make them a present of it.

Mrs. Bel. That's very surprising, when you offered to make them a present of it.

Lady Rach. They alledge that the audiences are tired of crying at comedies; and insist that my *Despairing Shepherdess* is absolutely too dismal for representation.

Mrs. Bel. What, though you have introduced a lawyer in a new light!

Lady Rach. Yes, and have a boarding-school romp, that slaps her mother's face, and throws a basin of scalding water at her governess.

Mrs. Bell. Why, surely, these are capital jokes!

Lady Rach. But the managers can't find them out.—However, I am determined to bring it out somewhere; and I have discovered such a treasure for my boarding-school romp, as exceeds the most sanguine expectation of criticism.

Mrs. Bel. How fortunate!

Lady Rach. Going to Mrs. Le Blond, my milliner's, this morning, to see some contraband licks (for you know there's a foreign milliner just arrived), I heard a loud voice rehearsing Juliet, from the dining-room; and upon enquiry found that it was a country girl just eloped from her friends in town, to go upon the stage with an Irish manager.

Mrs. Bel. Ten to one, the strange woman's niece, who has been here this morning. [*Aside.*

Lady Rach. Mrs. Le Blond has some doubts about the manager, it seems, though she hasn't seen him yet, because the apartments are very expensive, and were taken by a fine gentleman out of livery.

Mrs. Bel. What am I to think of this?—Pray, Lady Rachel, as you have conversed with this young actress, I suppose you could procure me a sight of her!

Lady Rach. This moment if you will, I am very intimate with her already; but pray keep the matter a secret from your husband, for he is so witty, you know, upon my passion for the drama, that I shall be teized to death by him.

Mrs. Bel. O you may be very sure that your secret is safe, for I have a most particular reason to keep it from Mr. Belville; but he is coming this way with Captain Savage, let us at present avoid him. [*Exeunt.*

Enter BELVILLE and Captain SAVAGE.

Capt. You are a very strange man, Belville; you are for ever tremblingly solicitous about the happiness of your wife, yet for ever endangering it by your passion for variety.

Bel. Why, there is certainly a contradiction between my principles and my practice; but if ever you marry, you'll be able to reconcile it perfectly. Possession, Savage! O, possession, is a miserable whetter of the appetite in love! and I own myself so sad a fellow, that though I wou'dn't exchange Mrs. Belville's mind for any woman's upon earth, there is scarcely a woman's person upon earth, which is not to me a stronger object of attraction.

Capt. Then perhaps in a little time you'll be weary of Miss Leeson.

Bel.

Bel. To be sure I shall; though to own the truth, I have not yet carried my point conclusively with the little monkey.

Capt. Why how the plague has she escaped a moment in your hands?

Bel. By a mere accident.—She came to the lodgings, which my man Spruce prepared for her, rather unexpectedly last night, so that I happened to be engaged particularly in another quarter—you understand me—and the damn'd aunt found me so much employment all the morning, that I could only send a message by Spruce, promising to call upon her the first moment I had to spare in the course of the day.

Capt. And so you are previously satisfied that you shall be tired of her?

Bel. Tired of her?—Why I am at this moment in pursuit of fresh game, against the hour of satiety:—game that you know to be exquisite: and I fancy I shall bring it down, though it is closely guarded by a deal of that pride, which passes for virtue with the generality of your mighty good people.

Capt. Indeed! and may a body know this wonder?

Bel. You are to be trusted with any thing, for you are the closest fellow I ever knew, and the rack itself would hardly make you discover one of your own secrets to any body—what do you think of Miss Walsingham?

Capt. Miss Walsingham!—Death and the devil! [*Aside.*

Bel. Miss Walsingham.

Capt. Why surely she has not received your addresses with any degree of approbation?

Bel. With every degree of approbation I could expect.

Capt. She has?

Bel. Ay: why this news surprises you?

Capt. It does indeed!

Bel. Ha, ha, ha! I can't help laughing to think what a happy dog Miss Walsingham's husband is likely to be!

Capt. A very happy dog, truly!

Bel. She's a delicious girl, isn't she, Savage?—but she'll require a little more trouble;—for a fine woman, like a fortified town, to speak in your father's language, demands a regular siege; and we must even allow

allow her the honours of war, to magnify the greatness of our own victory.

Capt. Well, it amazes me how you gay fellows ever have the presumption to attack a woman of principle; Miss Walsingham has no apparent levity of any kind about her.

Bel. No; but she continued in my house, after I had whispered my passion in her ear, and gave me a second opportunity of addressing her improperly; what greater encouragement could I desire?

Enter SPRUCE.

Well, Spruce, what are your commands?

Spruce. My Lady is just gone out with Lady Rachel, Sir.

Bel. I understand you.

Spruce. I believe you do. [*Aside.*] [*Exit.*]

Capt. What is the English of these significant looks between Spruce and you?

Bel. Only that Miss Walsingham is left alone, and that I have now an opportunity of entertaining her; you must excuse me, Savage; you must, upon my soul; but not a word of this affair to any body; because when I shake her off my hands, there may be fools enough to think of her upon terms of honourable matrimony. [*Exit.*]

Capt. So, here's a discovery! a precious discovery! and while I have been racking my imagination, and sacrificing my interest, to promote the happiness of this woman, she has been listening to the addresses of another; to the addresses of a married man! the husband of her friend, and the intimate friend of her intended husband!—By Belville's own account, however, she has not yet proceeded to any criminal lengths—But why did she keep the affair a secret from me? or why did she continue in his house after a repeated declaration of his unwarrantable attachment?—What's to be done?—If I open my engagement with her to Belville, I am sure he will instantly desert;—but then her honour is left in a state extremely questionable—It shall be still conceal'd—While it remains unknown, Belville will himself tell me every thing;—and doubt, upon an occasion of this nature, is infinitely more insupportable than the downright falsehood of the woman whom we love. [*Exit.*]

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

A C T II.

SCENE, *an Apartment in General SAVAGE's House.*

Enter General SAVAGE and TORRINGTON.

Gen. ZOUNDS! Torrington, give me quarter, when I surrender up my sword: I own that for these twenty years, I have been suffering all the inconveniencies of marriage, without tasting any one of its comforts, and rejoicing in an imaginary freedom, while I was really grovelling in chains.

Tor. In the dirtiest chains upon earth;—yet you wou'dn't be convinced, but laugh'd at all your married acquaintance as slaves, when not one of them put up with half so much from the worst wife, as you were obliged to crouch under from a kept mistress.

Gen. 'Tis too true. But, you know, she sacrificed much for me;—you know that she was the widow of a colonel, and refused two very advantageous matches on my account.—

Tor. If she was the widow of a judge, and had refused a high chancellor, she was still a devil incarnate, and you were in course a madman to live with her.

Gen. You don't remember her care of me when I have been sick.—

Tor. I recollect, however, her usage of you in health, and you may easily find a tenderer nurse, when you are bound over by the gout or the rheumatism.

Gen. Well, well, I agree with you that she is a devil incarnate; but I am this day determin'd to part with her for ever.

Tor. Not you indeed.

Gen. What, don't I know my own mind?

Tor. Not you indeed, when she is in the question: with every body else, your resolution is as unalterable as a determination in the house of peers; but Mrs. Tempest is your fate, and she reverses your decrees with as little difficulty as a fraudulent debtor now-a-days procures his certificate under a commission of bankruptcy.

Gen.

Gen. Well, if, like the Roman Fabius, I conquer by delay, in the end there will be no great reason to find fault with my generalship. The proposal of parting now comes from herself.

Tor. O, you daren't make it for the life of you.

Gen. You must know that this morning we had a smart cannonading on Belville's account, and she threatens, as I told you before, to quit my house if I don't challenge him for taking away her niece.

Tor. That fellow is the very devil among the women, and yet there isn't a man in England fonder of his wife.

Gen. Poh, if the young minx hadn't surrendered to him, she would have capitulated to somebody else, and I shall at this time be doubly obliged to him, if he is any ways instrumental in getting the aunt off my hands.

Tor. Why at this time?

Gen. Because, to shew you how fix'd my resolution is to be a keeper no longer, I mean to marry immediately.

Tor. And can't you avoid being pressed to death, like a felon who refuses to plead, without incurring a sentence of perpetual imprisonment?

Gen. I fancy you would yourself have no objection to a perpetual imprisonment in the arms of Miss Walsingham.

Tor. But have you any reason to think that upon examination in a case of love, she would give a favourable reply to your interrogatories?

Gen. The greatest—do you think I'd hazard such an engagement without being perfectly sure of my ground? Notwithstanding my present connection won't suffer me to see a modest woman at my own house—She always treats me with particular attention whenever I visit at Belville's, or meet her any where else—If fifty young fellows are present, she directs all her assiduities to the old soldier, and my son has a thousand times told me that she professes the highest opinion of my understanding.

Tor. And truly you give a notable proof of your understanding, in thinking of a woman almost young enough to be your grand-daughter.

Gen. Nothing like an experienced chief to command in any garrison.

Tor. Recollect the state of your present citadel.

Gen.

Gen. Well, if I am blown up by my own mine, I should be the only sufferer—There's another thing I want to talk of, I am going to marry my son to Miss Moreland.

Tor. Miss Moreland!—

Gen. Belville's sister.

Tor. O, ay, I remember that Moreland had got a good estate to assume the name of Belville.

Gen. I haven't yet mentioned the matter to my son, but I settled the affair with the girl's mother yesterday, and she only waits to communicate it to Belville who is her oracle you know.

Tor. And are you sure the captain will like her?

Gen. I am not so unreasonable as to insist upon his liking her, I shall only insist upon his marrying her.

Tor. What, whether he likes her or not?

Gen. When I issue my orders, I expect them to be obeyed; and don't look for an examination into their propriety.

Tor. What a delightful thing it must be to live under a military government, where a man is not to be troubled with the exercise of his understanding.

Gen. Miss Moreland has thirty thousand pounds—That's a large sum of ammunition money.

Tor. Ay, but a marriage merely on the score of fortune, is only gilding the death-warrant sent down for the execution of a prisoner. However, as I know your obstinate attachment to what you once resolve, I sha'n't pretend to argue with you; where are the papers which you want me to consider?

Gen. They are in my library—File off with me to the next room, and they shall be laid before you—But first I'll order the chariot, for the moment I have your opinion, I purpose to sit down regularly before Miss Walsingham—who waits there?

Enter a Servant.

Gen. Is Mrs. Tempest at home?

Serv. Yes, Sir, just come in, and just going out again.

Gen. Very well; order the chariot to be got ready.

Serv. Sir, one of the pannels was broke last night at the opera-house.

H h

Gen.

THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES:

Gen. Sir, I didn't call to have the pleasure of your conversation, but to have obedience paid to my orders.

Tor. Go order the chariot, you blockhead.

Serv. With the broken pannel, Sir?

Gen. Yes, you rascal, if both pannels were broke, and the back shattered to pieces.

Serv. The coachman thinks that one of the wheels is damaged, Sir.

Gen. Don't attempt to reason, you dog, but execute your orders.—Bring the chariot without the wheels—if you can't bring it with them.

Tor. Ay bring it, if you reduce it to a fledge, and let your master look like a malefactor for high treason, on his journey to Tyburn.

Enter Mrs. TEMPEST.

Mrs. Temp. General Savage, is the house to be for ever a scene of noise with your domineering?—The chariot sha'n't be brought—it won't be fit for use till it is repaired—and John shall drive it this very minute to the coach-maker's.

Gen. Nay, my dear, if it isn't fit for use that's another thing.

Tor. Here's the experienced chief that's fit to command in any gar-rison. *[aside.]*

Gen. Go, order me the coach then. *[to the Servant.]*

Mrs. Temp. You can't have the coach.

Gen. And why so, my love?

Mrs. Temp. Because I want it for myself.—Robert, get a hack for your master—though indeed I don't see what business he has out of the house. *[Exit Mrs. Tempest and Robert.]*

Tor. When you issue your orders, you expect them to be obeyed, and don't look for an examination into their propriety.

Gen. The fury!—this has steel'd me against her for ever, and nothing on earth can now prevent me from drumming her out immediately.

Mrs. Temp. *[behind.]* An unreasonable old fool—But I'll make him know who governs this house!

Gen. Zounds! here she comes again; she has been lying in ambush, I suppose, and has overheard us.

Tor. What if she has! you are steel'd against her for ever.

Gen.

Gen. No, she's not coming—she's going down stairs;—and now, dear Torrington, you must be as silent as a sentinel on an out-post about this affair. If that virago was to hear a syllable of it, she might perhaps attack Miss Walsingham in her very camp, and defeat my whole plan of operations.

Tor. I thought you were determined to drum her out immediately.

[*Exeunt.*]

The SCENE changes to BELVILLE'S.

Enter Miss WALSINGHAM, followed by BELVILLE.

Miss Wal. I beg, Sir, that you will insult me no longer with solicitations of this nature—Give me proofs of your sincerity indeed! What proofs of sincerity can your situation admit of, if I could be even weak enough to think of you with partiality at all?

Bel. If our affections, Madam, were under the government of our reason, circumstanced as I am, this unhappy bosom wouldn't be torn by passion for Miss Walsingham.—Had I been blest'd with your acquaintance, before I saw Mrs. Belville, my hand as well as my heart, wou'd have been humbly offered to your acceptance—fate, however, has ordered it otherwise, and it is cruel to reproach me with that situation as a crime, which ought to be pitied as my greatest misfortune.

Miss Wal. He's actually forcing tears into his eyes.—However, I'll mortify him severely. [aside.]

Bel. But such proofs of sincerity as my situation can admit of, you shall yourself command, as my only business in existence is to adore you.

Miss Wal. His only business in existence to adore me! [aside.]

Bel. Prostrate at your feet, my dearest Miss Walsingham [kneeling] behold a heart eternally devoted to your service.—You have too much good sense, Madam, to be the slave of custom, and too much humanity not to pity the wretchedness you have caused.—Only, therefore, say that you commiserate my sufferings—I'll ask no more—and surely that may be said, without any injury to your purity, to snatch even an enemy from distraction—where's my handkerchief? [aside.]

Mrs. Wal. Now to answer in his own way, and to make him ridiculous to himself—[aside.] If I thought, if I could think [affecting to weep] that these protestations were real.

H h 2

Bel.

Bel. How can you, Madam, be so unjust to your own merit? how can you be so cruelly doubtful of my solemn asseverations?—Here I again kneel, and swear eternal love!

Miss Wal. I don't know what to say—but there is one proof—[*affecting to weep.*]

Bel. Name it, my angel, this moment, and make me the happiest of mankind!

Miss Wal. Swear to be mine for ever.

Bel. I have sworn it a thousand times, my charmer; and I will swear it to the last moment of my life.

Miss Wal. Why then—but don't look at me I beseech you—I don't know how to speak it—

Bel. The delicious emotion—do not check the generous tide of tenderness that fills me with such ecstasy.

Miss Wal. You'll despise me for this weakness.

Bel. This weakness—this generosity, which will demand my everlasting gratitude.

Miss Wal. I am a fool—but there is a kind of fatality in this affair—and I do consent to go off with you.

Bel. Eternal blessings on your condescension.

Miss Wal. You are irresistible, and I am ready to fly with you to any part of the world.

Bel. Fly to any part of the world indeed—you shall fly by yourself then! [*aside.*] You are the most lovely, the most tender creature in the world, and thus again let me thank you: O, Miss Walsingham, I cannot express how happy you've made me!—But where's the necessity of our leaving England?

Miss Wal. I thought he wouldn't like to go abroad—[*aside.*] That I may possess the pleasure of your company unrival'd.

Bel. I must cure her of this taste for travelling— [*aside.*

Miss Wal. You don't answer, Mr. Belville?

Bel. Why, I was turning the consequence of your proposal in my thoughts, as going off—going off—you know—

Miss. Why going off, you know, is going off—And what objections can you have to going off?

Bel.

Bel. Why going off will subject you, at a certainty, to the slander of the world; whereas, by staying at home, we may not only have numberless opportunities of meeting, but at the same time prevent suspicion itself from ever breathing on your reputation.

Miss Wal. I didn't dream of your starting any difficulties, Sir.—Just now I was dearer to you than all the world.

Bel. And so you are, by Heaven!

Miss Wal. Why won't you sacrifice the world then at once to obtain me?

Bel. Surely, my dearest life, you must know the necessity, which every man of honour is under, of keeping up his character?

Miss Wal. So, here's this fellow swearing to ten thousand lies, and yet talking very gravely about his honour and his character. [*aside.* Why, to be sure in these days, Mr. Belville, the instances of conjugal infidelity are so very scarce, and men of fashion are so remarkable for a tender attachment to their wives, that I don't wonder at your circumspection—But do you think I can stoop to accept you by halves, or admit of any partnership in your heart?

Bel. O, you must do more than that, if you have any thing to say to me. [*aside.*] Surely, Madam, when you know my whole soul unalterably your own, you will permit me to preserve those appearances with the world, which are indispensably requisite—Mrs. Belville is a most excellent woman, however it may be my fortune to be devoted to another—Her happiness, besides, constitutes a principal part of my felicity, and if I was publicly to forsake her, I should be hunted as a monster from society.

Miss Wal. Then I suppose it is by way of promoting Mrs. Belville's repose, Sir, that you make love to other women; and by way of shewing the nicety of your honour, that you attempt the purity of such as your own roof, peculiarly, intitles to protection. For the honour intended to me—thus, low to the ground, I thank you, Mr. Belville.

Bel. Laughed at, by all the stings of mortification!

Miss Wal. Good b'ye.—Don't let this accident mortify your vanity too much;—but take care, the next time you vow everlasting love, that the object is neither tender enough to sob—sob—at your distress; nor provoking enough to make a proposal of leaving England.—How greatly

greatly a little common sense can lower these fellows of extraordinary impudence? *[Exit.]*

Bel. [alone.] So then, I am fairly taken in, and she has been only diverting herself with me all this time:—however, lady fair, I may chance to have the laugh in a little time on my side; for if you can sport in this manner about the flame, I think it must in the run lay hold of your wings:—what shall I do in this affair?—she sees the matter in its true light, and there's no good to be expected from thumping of bosoms, or squeezing white handkerchiefs;—no, these won't do with women of sense, and, in a short time, they'll be ridiculous to the very babies of a boarding school.

Enter Captain SAVAGE.

Capt. Well, Belville, what news? You have had a fresh opportunity with Miss Wallingham.

Bel. Why, faith, Savage, I've had a most extraordinary scene with her, and yet have but little reason to brag of my good fortune, though she offered in express terms to run away with me.

Capt. Prithee explain yourself, man; she couldn't surely be so shameless!

Bel. O, her offering to run away with me, was by no means the worst part of the affair.

Capt. No, then it must be damn'd bad indeed! but prithee, hurry to an explanation.

Bel. Why then, the worst part of the affair is, that she was laughing at me the whole time; and made this proposal of an elopement, with no other view, than to shew me in strong colours to myself, as a very dirty fellow to the best wife in England.

Capt. I am easy. *[aside.]*

Enter SPRUCE.

Spruce. Sir, there is an Irish gentleman below with a letter for you, who will deliver it to nobody but yourself.

Bel. Shew him up then.

Spruce. Yes, Sir.

Capt. It may be on business, Belville; I'll take my leave of you.

Bel.

Bel. O, by no means; I can have no business which I desire to keep from you, though you are the arrantest miser of your confidence upon earth, and would rather trust your life in any body's hands, than even a paltry amour with the apprentice of a milliner.

Enter CONNOLLY.

Con. Gentlemin; your most obedient; pray which of you is Mr. Belville?

Bel. My name is Belville, at your service, Sir.

Con. I have a little bit of a letter for you, Sir.

Bel. [reads.]

S I R,

The people where Miss Leeson lately lodged asserting positively that you have taken her away in a fictitious character, the brother of that unhappy girl thinks himself obliged to demand satisfaction for the injury you have done his family; though a stranger to your person, he is sufficiently acquainted with your reputation for spirit, and shall, therefore, make no doubt of seeing you with a case of pistols, near the Ring in Hyde Park, at eight o'clock this evening, to answer the claims of

To Craggs Belville, Esq.

George Leeson.

Capt. Eight o'clock in the evening! 'tis a strange time!

Con. Why so, honey? A fine evening is as good a time for a bad action as a fine morning; and if a man of sense can be such a fool to fight a duel, he should never sleep upon the matter, for the more he thinks of it, the more he must feel himself ashamed of his resolution.

Bel. A pretty letter!

Con. O yes, an invitation to a brace of bullets is a very pretty thing.

Bel. For a challenge, however, 'tis very civilly written!

Con. Faith, if it was written to me, I shou'dn't be very fond of such civility; I wonder he doesn't sign himself your most obedient servant.

Capt. I told you Leeson's character, and what would become of this damn'd business; but your affairs—are they settled, Belville?

Bel. O they are always settled—for as this is a country where people occasionally die, I take constant care to be prepared for contingencies.

Con. Occasionally die!—I'll be very much obliged to you, Sir, if you tell me the country where people do not die? for I'll immediately go and end my days there.

Bel. Ha! ha! ha!

Con. Faith, you may laugh gintlemin, but though I am a foolish Irishman, and come about a foolish piece of business, I'd prefer a snug birth in this world, bad as it is, to the finest coffin in all Christendom.

Bel. I am surpris'd, Sir, that thinking in this manner, you would be the bearer of a challenge.

Con. And well you may, Sir.—But we must often take a pleasure in serving our friends, by doing things that are very disagreeable to us.

Capt. Then you think Mr. Leeson much to blame, perhaps, for hazarding his life where he can by no means repair the honour of his sister.

Con. Indeed and I do—But I shall think this gintlemin, begging his pardon, much more to blame for meeting him.

Bel. And why so, Sir—You wou'dn't have me disappoint your friend?

Con. Faith, and that I would—He, poor lad, may have some reason at present to be tired of the world, but you have a fine estate, a fine wife, a fine parcel of children—in short, honey, you have every thing to make you fond of living, and the devil burn me, was I in your case, if I'd stake my own happiness against the misery of any man.

Bel. I am very much obliged to your advice, Sir, though on the present occasion I cannot adopt it; be so good as to present my compliments to your friend, and tell him I shall certainly do myself the honour of attending his appointment.

Con. Why then upon my soul I am very sorry for it.

Capt. 'Tis not very customary, Sir, with gentlemen of Ireland to oppose an affair of honour.

Con. They are like the gintlemin of England, Sir, they are brave to a fault; yet I hope to see the day that it will be infamous to draw the swords of either, against any body but the enemies of their country. [*Exit.*]

Bel. I am quite charmed with this honest Hibernian, and would almost fight a duel for the pleasure of his acquaintance.

Capt. Come, step with me a little, and let us consider whether there may not be some method of accommodating this cursed business.

Bel.

Bel. Peh! don't be uneasy upon my account; my character, with regard to affairs of this nature, is unhappily too well established, and you may be sure that I sha'n't fight with Leeson.

Capt. No—you have injured him greatly?

Bel. The very reason of all others why I should not cut his throat.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter SPRUCE.

Spruce. What, the devil, this master of mine has got a duel upon his hands! Zounds! I am sorry for that; he is a prince of a fellow! and a good subject must always love his prince, though he may now and then be a little out of humour with his actions.

Enter General SAVAGE.

Gen. Your hall-door standing open, Spruce, and none of your sentinels being on guard, I have surpris'd your camp thus far without resistance: Where is your master?

Spruce. Just gone out with Captain Savage, Sir.

Gen. Is your lady at home?

Spruce. No, Sir, but Miss Walsingham is at home, shall I inform her of your visit?

Gen. There is no occasion to inform her of it, for here she is, Spruce.

[*Exit Spruce.*

Enter Miss WALSINGHAM.

Miss Wal. General Savage, your most humble servant.

Gen. My dear Miss Walsingham, it is rather cruel that you should be left at home by yourself, and yet I am greatly rejoiced to find you at present without company.

Miss Wal. I can't but think myself in the best company, when I have the honour of your conversation, General.

Gen. You flatter me too much, Madam; yet I am come to talk to you on a serious affair, Miss Walsingham; an affair of importance to me and to yourself: Have you leisure to favour me with a short audience, if I beat a parley?

Miss Wal. Any thing of importance to you, Sir, is always sufficient to command my leisure.—Tis as the captain suspected.

[*aside.*

I i

Gen.

Gen. You tremble, my lovely girl, but don't be alarmed; for though my business is of an important nature, I hope it won't be of a disagreeable one.

Miss Wal. And yet I am greatly agitated. *[Aside.*

Gen. Soldiers, Miss Walsingham, are said to be generally favour'd by the kind partiality of the ladies.

Miss Wal. The ladies are not without gratitude, Sir, to those who devote their lives peculiarly the service of their country.

Gen. Generously said, Madam: Then give me leave, without any masked battery, to ask, if the heart of an honest soldier is a prize at all worth your acceptance.

Miss Wal. Upon my word, Sir, there's no masked battery in this question.

Gen. I am as fond of a coup de main, Madam, in love as in war, and hate the tedious method of sapping a town, when there is a possibility of entering sword in hand.

Miss Wal. Why, really, Sir, a woman may as well know her own mind, when she is summoned by the trumpet of a lover, as when she undergoes all the tiresome formality of a siege. You see I have caught your own mode of conversing, General.

Gen. And a very great compliment I consider it, Madam: but now that you have candidly confess'd an acquaintance with your own mind, answer me with that frankness for which every body admires you so much. Have you any objection to change the name of Walsingham?

Miss Wal. Why then frankly, General Savage, I say no.

Gen. Ten thousand thanks to you for this kind declaration.

Miss Wal. I hope you won't think it a forward one.

Gen. I'd sooner see my son run away in the day of battle.—I'd sooner think Lord Ruffel was bribed by Lewis XIVth, and sooner vilify the memory of Algernon Sidney.

Miss Wal. How unjust it was ever to suppose the General a tyrannical father! *[Aside.*

Gen. You have told me condescendingly, Miss Walsingham, that you have no objection to change your name, I have but one question more to ask.

Miss Wal. Pray propose it.

Gen.

Gen. Would the name of Savage be disagreeable to you?—Speak frankly again, my dear girl!

Miss Wal. Why then again I frankly say, no.

Gen. You make me too happy; and though I shall readily own, that a proposal of this nature would come with more propriety from my son—

Miss Wal. I am much better pleased that you make the proposal yourself, Sir.

Gen. You are too good to me.—Torrington thought that I should meet with a repulse. [Aside.]

Miss Wal. Have you communicated this business to the Captain, Sir?

Gen. No, my dear Madam, I did not think that at all necessary. I have always been attentive to the Captain's happiness, and I propose that he shall be married in a few days.

Miss Wal. What, whether I will or no?

Gen. O, you can have no objection.

Miss Wal. I must be consulted, however, about the day, General: but nothing in my power shall be wanting to make him happy.

Gen. Obliging loveliness!

Miss Wal. You may imagine, that if I was not previously impressed in favour of your proposal, it would not have met my concurrence so readily.

Gen. Then you own that I had a previous friend in the garrison.

Miss Wal. I don't blush to acknowledge it when I consider the accomplishments of the object, Sir.

Gen. O this is too much, Madam; the principal merit of the object is his passion for Miss Walsingham.

Miss Wal. Don't say that, General, I beg of you, for I don't think there are many women in the kingdom, who could behold him with indifference.

Gen. Ah, you flattering, flattering angel!—and yet, by the memory of Marlborough, my lovely girl, it was the idea of a prepossession on your part, which encouraged me to hope for a favourable reception.

Miss Wal. Then I must have been very indiscreet, for I labour'd to conceal that prepossession as much as possible.

Gen. You cou'dn't conceal it from me! you cou'dn't conceal it from me!—The female heart is a field which I am thoroughly acquainted with, and which has more than once been a witness to my victories, Madam.

Miss Wal. I don't at all doubt your success with the ladies, General; but as we now understand one another so perfectly, you will give me leave to retire.

Gen. One word, my dear creature, and no more; I shall wait upon you some time to-day, with Mr. Torrington, about the necessary settlements.

Miss Wal. You must do as you please, General, you are invincible in every thing.

Gen. And if you please, we'll keep every thing a profound secret, till the articles are all settled, and the definitive treaty ready for execution.

Miss Wal. You may be sure, that delicacy will not suffer me to be communicative on the subject, Sir.

Gen. Then you leave every thing to my management.

Miss Wal. I can't trust a more noble negociator. [Exit.

Gen. The day's my own. [sings.] Britons, strike home! strike home! Revenge, &c. [Exit singing.]

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT

A C T III.

SCENE, Miss LEESON's Lodgings.

Enter Lady RACHEL MILDEW, Mrs. BELVILLE, and Miss LEESON.

Lady Rach. **W**ELL, Mrs. Belville, I am extremely glad you agree with me, in opinion of this young lady's qualifications for the stage. Don't you think she'd play Miss Headstrong admirably in my comedy?

Mrs. Bel. Yes, indeed, I think she possesses a natural fund of spirit, very much adapted to the character. 'Tis impossible, surely, that this hoyden can have a moment's attraction for Mr. Belville! [*aside.*

Miss Leef. You are very obliging, ladies; but I have no turn for comedy; my forte is tragedy entirely.

Alphonso!—O *Alphonso!* to thee I call, &c.

Lady Rach. But, my dear, is there none of our comedies to your taste?

Miss Leef. O yes; some of the sentimental ones are very pretty, there's such little difference between them and tragedies.

Lady Rach. And pray, my dear, how long have you been engaged to Mr. Frankly?

Miss Leef. I only came away last night, and hav'n't seen Mr. Frankly since, though I expect him every moment.

Mrs. Bel. Last night! just as Mrs. Tempest mentioned. [*aside.*

Lady Rach. You had the concurrence of your friends?

Miss Leef. Not I, Madam; Mr. Frankly said, I had too much genius to mind my friends, and as I should want nothing from them, there was no occasion to consult them in the affair.

Lady Rach. Then Osbaldiston is not your real name, perhaps?

Miss Leef. O no, nor do I tell my real name: I chose Osbaldiston, because it was a long one, and wou'd make a striking appearance in the bills.

Mrs. Bel. I wish we could see Mr. Frankly.

Miss Leef. Perhaps you may, Madam, for he designs to give me a lesson every day, till we are ready to set off for Ireland.

Lady Rach. Suppose then, my dear, you would oblige us with a scene in Juliet, by way of shewing your proficiency to Mrs. Belville.

Miss Leef. Will you stand up for Romeo?

Lady Rach. With all my heart, and I'll give you some instructions.

Miss Leef. I beg pardon, Ma'am; I'll learn to act under nobody but Mr. Frankly. This room is without a carpet; if you will step into the next, ladies, I'll endeavour to oblige you.

Shall I not be environ'd, distraught—

This way Ladies.

Lady Rach. Pray, Madam, shew us the way.

[Exeunt Miss Leef. and Lady Rach.]

Mrs. Bel. I'll prolong this mummery as much as possible, in hopes the manager may come. Lie still, poor fluttering heart! it cannot be the lord of all your wishes! it cannot surely be your adored Belville! *[Exit.]*

Re-enter Miss Leeson.

Miss Leef. Haven't I left my Romeo and Juliet here? O yes, there it is.

Enter Belville.

Bel. ———O, were those eyes in heav'n,
They'd thro' the starry region shine so bright,
That birds would sing, and think it was the morn!

Miss Leef. Ah, my dear Mr. Frankly! I'm so glad you are come! I was dying to see you.

Bel. Kifs me, my dear;—why didn't you send me word of your intention to come away last night?

Miss Leef. I hadn't time: but as I knew where the lodgings were, I thought I should be able to find you by a note to the coffee-house I always directed to.

Bel. Kifs me again, my little sparkler!

Miss Leef. Nay, I won't be kifs'd in this manner; for though I am going on the stage, I intend to have some regard for my character.

But,

But, ha! ha! ha! I am glad you are come now; I have company above stairs.

Bel. Company! that's unlucky at this time, for I wanted to make you entirely easy about your character. [*aside.*] And pray, my dear, who is your company? You know we must be very cautious, for fear of your relations.

Miss Leef. O, they are only ladies.—But one of them is the most beautiful creature in the world!

Bel. The devil she is!

Miss Leef. An earth-trading star, and makes dim heav'ns light.

Bel. Zounds! I'll take a peep at the star, who knows but I may have an opportunity of making another actress. [*aside.*]

Miss Leef. Come, charmer! charmer!

Bel. ————— *Wer't thou as far,
As that vast shore, wash'd by the farthest sea,
I wou'd adventure for such merchandise.*

Now let's see what fortune has sent us above stairs. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE changes to a Dining Room at Miss LEESON'S.

Mrs. BELVILLE, and Lady RACHEL discovered.

Mrs. Bel. This is a most ignorant young creature, Lady Rachel.

Lady Rach. Why I think she is—did you observe how she slighted my offer of instructing her?

Enter Miss LEESON.

Miss Leef. Ladies!—ladies!—here he is! here is Mr. Frankly!

Enter BELVILLE bowing very low, and not seeing the Ladies.

Bel. Ladies your most obedient.

Mrs. Bel. Let me, if possible, recollect myself—Sir, your most obedient humble servant.

Bel. Zounds! let me out of the house.

Lady Rach. What do I see?

Miss Leef. You seem, ladies, to know this gentleman?

Mrs. Bel. (*Taking hold of him.*) You sha'n't go, renegade—You laugh'd at my credulity this morning, and I must now laugh at your embarrassment.

Bel.

Bel. What a kind thing it would be in any body to blow out my stupid brains?

Lady Rach. I'll mark this down for an incident in my comedy.

Miss Leef. What do you hang your head for, Mr. Frankly?

Bel. Be so good as to ask that lady, my dear.—The Devil has been long in my debt, and now he pays me home with a witness.

Mrs. Bel. What a cruel thing it is to let Mrs. Tempest out, my love, without somebody to take care of her!

Miss Leef. What, do you know Mrs. Tempest, Madam?

Mrs. Bel. Yes, my dear;—and I am pretty well acquainted with this gentleman.

Miss Leef. What isn't this gentleman the manager of a playhouse in Ireland?

Bel. The curtain is almost dropt, my dear; the farce is nearly over, and you'll be speedily acquainted with the catastrophe.

Enter Mrs. TEMPEST.

Mrs. Tem. Yes, Sir, the curtain is almost dropt: I have had spies to watch your haunts, and the catastrophe ends in your detection—Come, you abandon'd slut—

Miss Leef. And have I eloped after all, without being brought upon the stage?

Mrs. Temp. I don't know that you would be brought upon the stage; but I am sure you were near being brought upon the town. I hope, Madam, for the future, you'll set me down a mad-woman.

[To Mrs. Bel.]

Mrs. Bel. Mr. Belville, you'll make my apologies to this lady, and acknowledge that I think her perfectly in her senses.

Bel. I wish that I had entirely lost mine.

Lady Rach. [writing.] *I wish that I had entirely lost mine.* A very natural wish in such a situation.

Mrs. Temp. Come, you audacious minx, come away. You shall be sent into Yorkshire this very evening; and see what your poor mother will say to you, hussy.

Miss Leef. I will go on the stage, if I die for't; and 'tis some comfort there's a playhouse at York. [Exit Mrs. Tempest, and Miss Leeson.]

Bel.

Bel. Nancy, I am so ashamed, so humbled, and so penitent, that if you knew what passes here, I am sure you wou'd forgive me.

Mrs. Bel. My love, though I cannot say I rejoice in your infidelity, yet, believe me, I pity your distress: let us therefore think no more of this.

Lady Rach. [*writing.*] *And think no more of this.*—This conduct is new in a wife, and very dramatic.

Bel. Where, my angel, have you acquired so many requisites to charm with?

Mrs. Bel. In your society, my dear; and believe me—that a wife may be as true a friend as any bottle companion upon earth, though she can neither get merry with you over night, nor blow out your brains about some foolish quarrel in the morning.

Bel. If wives knew the omnipotence of virtue, where she wears a smile upon her face, they'd all follow your bewitching example, and make a faithless husband quite an incredible character.

Lady Rach. Quite an incredible character!—Let me set down that.
[*writing.*]

SCENE changes to General SAVAGE's.

Enter General and Captain.

Gen. Yes, Horace, I have been just visiting at Belville's.

Capt. You found nobody at home, but Miss Walsingham?

Gen. No, but I'd a long conversation with her, and upon a very interesting subject.

Capt. 'Tis as I guess'd. [*aside.*]

Gen. She is a most amiable creature, Horace.

Capt. So she is, Sir, and will make any man happy that marries her.

Gen. I am glad you think so.

Capt. He's glad I think so!—'tis plain,—but I must leave every thing to himself, and seem wholly passive in the affair. [*aside.*]

Gen. A married life after all, Horace, I am now convinced is the most happy, as well as the most reputable.

Capt. It is indeed, Sir.

Gen. Then, perhaps, you would have no objection to be married, if I offered you as agreeable a young woman as Miss Walsingham.

K k

Capt.

Capt. 'Twou'd be my first pride on every occasion, Sir, to pay an implicit obedience to your commands.

Gen. That's sensibly said, Horace, and obligingly said; prepare yourself therefore for an introduction to the lady in the morning.

Capt. Is the lady prepared to receive me, Sir?

Gen. O yes; and you can't think how highly delighted Miss Walsingham appeared, when I acquainted her with my resolution on the subject.

Capt. She's all goodness!

Gen. The more I know her, the more I am charmed with her. I must not be explicit with him yet, for fear my secret should get wind, and reach the ears of the enemy. [*aside.*] I propose, Horace, that you should be married immediately.

Capt. The sooner the better, Sir, I have no will but your's.

Gen. [*shaking hands with him.*] By the memory of Marlbro', you are the most excellent boy!—But what do you think? Miss Walsingham insists upon naming the day.

Capt. And welcome, Sir; I am sure she won't make it a distant one.

Gen. O, she said that nothing in her power should be wanting to make you happy.

Capt. I am sure of that, Sir.

Gen. [*a loud knocking.*] Zounds, Horace! here's the disgrace and punishment of my life: let's avoid her as we would a fever in the camp.

Capt. Come to the library, and I'll tell you how whimsically she was treated this morning at Belville's.

Gen. Death and the devil! make haste. O, I must laugh at marriage and be curst to me! But I am providing, Horace, against your falling into my error.

Capt. I am eternally indebted to you, Sir.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE,

SCENE, BELVILLE'S House.

Enter Mrs. BELVILLE, and Lady RACHEL.

Lady Rach. Nay, Mrs. Belville, I have no patience; you act quite unnaturally.

Mrs. Bel. What! because I am unwilling to be miserable?

Lady Rach. This new instance of Mr. Belville's infidelity—This attempt to seduce Miss Walsingham, which your woman overheard, is unpardonable!

Mrs. Bel. I don't say but that I am strongly wounded by his irregularities. Yet if Mr. Belville is unhappily a rover, I wou'd much rather that he should have twenty mistresses than one.

Lady Rach. You astonish me!

Mrs. Bel. Why, don't you know, my dear Madam, that while he is divided amidst a variety of objects, 'tis impossible for him to have a serious attachment!

Lady Rach. Lord, Mrs. Belville! how can you speak with so much composure! a virtuous woman should be always outrageous upon such an occasion as this.

Mrs. Bel. What, and weary the innocent sun and moon from the firmament, like a despairing princess in a tragedy—No—no—Lady Rachel, 'tis bad enough to be indifferent to the man I love, without studying to excite his aversion.

Lady Rach. How glad I am that Miss Walsingham made him so heartily ashamed of himself: Lord, these young men are so full of levity: Give me a husband of Mr. Torrington's age, say I.

Mrs. Bel. And give me a husband of Mr. Belville's, say I, with all his follies: However, Lady Rachel, I am pretty well satisfied that my conduct at Miss Leeson's will have a proper effect upon Mr. Belville's generosity, and put an entire end to his gallantries for the future.

Lady Rach. Don't deceive yourself, my dear.—The gods in the shilling gallery would sooner give up Roast Beef, or go without an epilogue on the first night of a new piece.

Mrs. Bel. Why should you think so of such a man as Mr. Belville?

Lady Rach. Because Mr. Belville is a man: However, if you dare run the risque—we will try the sincerity of his reformation.

Mrs. Bel. If I dare run the risque! I would stake my soul upon his honour.

Lady Rach. Then your poor soul would be in a very terrible situation.

Mrs. Bel. By what test can we prove his sincerity?

Lady Rach. By a very simple one. You know I write so like Miss Wallingham, that our hands are scarcely known asunder.

Mrs. Bel. Well——

Lady Rach. Why then let me write to him as from her.

Mrs. Bel. If I did not think it would look like a doubt of his honour——

Lady Rach. Poh! dare you proceed upon my plan?—

Mrs. Bel. Most confidently: Come to my dressing room, where you'll find every thing ready for writing, and then you may explain your scheme more particularly.

Lady Rach. I'll attend you, but I am really sorry, my dear, for the love of propriety, to see you so calm under the perfidy of your husband; you should be quite wretched—indeed you should. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE, *the Temple.*

Enter LEESON.

The hell-hounds are after me, and if I am arrested at this time, my honour will not only be blown upon by Brudenell, but I shall perhaps lose Emily into the bargain. *[Exit.]*

Enter LEECH, CROW, and WOLF, dress'd in fur habits.

Leech. Yonder, my lads, he darts through the Cloisters; who the devil could think that he would smoke us in this disguise? Crow, do you take the Fleet-Street side of the Temple, as fast as you can, to prevent his doubling us that way—and, Wolf, do you run round the Garden court, that he mayn't escape us by the Thames—I'll follow the straight line myself, and the devil's in the dice if he is not snap'd by one of us. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE

SCENE changes to another Part of the Temple.

Enter LEESON on one side, CONNOLLY on the other.

Leef. Fly, open the chambers this moment—the bailiffs are after me.

Con. Faith and that I will—but it will be of no use to fly a step neither, if I haven't the key.

Leef. Zounds! did'nt you lock the door?

Con. Yes, but I believe I left the key on the inside—however your own key will do the business as well.

Leef. True, and I forgot it in my confusion, do you stay here, and throw every impediment in the way of these rascals.

Con. Faith, and that I will.

Enter CROW and WOLF.

Crow. Pray, Sir, did you see a gentleman run this way, dressed in green and gold.

Con. In troth I did.

Wolf. And which way did he run?

Con. That I can tell you too.

Wolf. We shall be much obliged to you.

Con. Indeed and you will not, Mr. Catchpole, for the devil an information shall you get from Connolly; I see plainly enough what you are, you blackguards, though there's no guessing at you in these fur-coats.

Crow. Keep your information to yourself and be damn'd; here the cull comes, a prisoner in the custody of master Leech.

Enter LEESON and LEECH.

Leef. Well but treat me like a gentleman—Don't expose me unnecessarily.

Leech. Expose you, Master, we never expose any body, 'till gentlemen that expose themselves, whenever they compels their creditors to arrest them.

Con. And where's your authority for arresting the gentleman; let us see it this minute, for may be you haven't it about you.

Leech. O, here's our authority, we knew as we had to do vid a lawyer, and so we came properly prepared, my master.

Leef. What shall I do?

Con. Why harkee, Sir—Don't you think that you and I could beat these three thieves, to their hearts content?—I have nothing but my carcase to venter for you, honey, but that you are as welcome to as the flowers in May.

Leef. O, by no means, Connolly, we must not fly in the face of the laws.

Con. That's the reason that you are going to fight a duel.

Leef. Harkee, officer—I have some very material business to execute in the course of this evening: here are five guineas for a little indulgence, and I assure you, upon the honour of a gentleman, that if I have life, I'll attend your own appointment to-morrow morning.

Leech. I can't do it, master—Five guineas to be sure is a genteel thing—but I have ten for the taking of you, do you see—and so if you please to step to my house in Southampton Buildings, you may send for some friend to bail you, or settle the affair as well as you can with the plaintiff.

Con. I'll go bail for him this minute, if you don't want somebody to to be bail for myself.

Leef. Let me reflect a moment.

Crow to Con. Can you swear yourself worth one hundred and seventy pounds when your debts are paid?

Con. In troth I cannot, nor one hundred and seventy pence—unless I have a mind to perjure myself.—But one man's body is as good as another's, and since he has no bail to give you but his flesh, the fattest of us two is the best security.

Wolf. No, if we can't get better bail than you, we shall lock up his body in prison according to law.

Con. Faith, and a very wise law it must be, which cuts off every method of getting money, by way of making us pay our debts.

Leech. Well, Mr. Leeson, what do you determine upon?

Leef. A moment's patience—yonder I see Mr. Torrington—a thought occurs—yet it carries the appearance of fraud—however as it will be really innocent, nay laughable in the end, and as my ruin or salvation depends upon my present decision, it must be hazarded.

Crow. Come, Master, fix upon something, and don't keep us waiting for you.

Con.

Con. By my soul, honey, he don't want you to wait for him; he'll be very much obliged to you if you go away, and leave him to follow his own business.

Leef. Well, gentlemen—here comes Mr. Torrington: you know him, I suppose, and will be satisfied with his security.

Leech. O, we'll take his bail for ten thousand pounds, my master—Every body knows him to be a man of fortune.

Leef. Give me leave to speak to him then, and I shall not be ungrateful for the civility.

Leech. Well we will—But harkee, lads, look to the passes, that no tricks may be play'd upon travellers.

Enter TORRINGTON.

Leef. Mr. Torrington, your most obedient.

Tor. Your humble servant.

Leef. I have many apologies to make, Mr. Torrington, for presuming to stop a gentleman to whom I have not the honour of being known; yet when I explain the nature of my business, Sir, I shall by no means despair of an excuse.

Tor. To the business, I beg, Sir.

Leef. You must know, Sir, that the three gentlemen behind me, are three traders from Dantzick, men of considerable property, who, in the present distracted state of Poland, wish to settle with their families in this country.

Tor. Dantzick traders.—Ay, I see, they are foreigners by their dress.

Leech. Ay, now he is opening the affair.

Leef. They want therefore to be naturalized—and have been recommended to me for legal advice.

Tor. You are at the bar, Sir.

Leef. I have eat my way to professional honour some time, Sir.

Tor. Ay, the cooks of the four societies take care that the students shall perform every thing that depends upon teeth, young gentleman.—The eating exercises are the only one's never dispens'd with.

Leef. I am, however, a very young Barrister, Mr. Torrington; and as the affair is of great importance to them, I am desirous that some gentleman

tleman of eminence in the law should revise my poor opinion, before they make it a ground of any serious determination.

Tor. You are too modest, young gentleman, to entertain any doubts upon this occasion, as nothing is clearer than the laws with respect to the naturalization of foreigners.

Con. Faith the old gentleman smiles very good-naturedly.

Leech. I fancy he'll stand it, Crow, and advance the crop for the youngster.

Leef. To be sure the laws are very clear to gentlemen of your superior abilities.—But I have candidly acknowledged the weakness of my own judgment to my clients, and advised them so warmly to solicit your opinion, that they will not be satisfied unless you kindly consent to oblige them.

Tor. O, if nothing but my opinion will satisfy them, let them follow me to my chambers, and I'll satisfy them directly.

Leef. You are extremely kind, Sir, and they shall attend you.—Gentlemen, will you be so good as to follow Mr. Torrington to his chambers, and he'll satisfy you entirely.

Wolf. Mind that!

Con. Musha! the blessing of St. Patrick upon that ould head of yours.

Tor. What, they speak English, do they?

Leef. Very tolerably, Sir, bred up general traders, they have a knowledge of several languages; and it would be highly for the good of the kingdom, if we could get more of them to settle among us.

Tor. Right, young gentleman! the number of the people forms the true riches of a state; however, now-a-days, London itself is not only gone out of town, but England itself, by an unaccountable fatality, seems inclined to take up her residence in America.

Leef. True, Sir! and to cultivate the barbarous borders of the Ohio, we are hourly deserting the beautiful banks of the Thames.

Tor. [*Shaking him by the hand.*] You must come and see me at chambers, young gentleman! we must be better known to one another.

Con. Do you mind that, you thieves?—

Leef. 'Twill be equally my pride, and my happiness to merit that honour, Sir.

Tor.

Tor. Let your friends follow me, Sir!—and pray do you call upon me soon; you shall see a little plan which I have drawn up to keep this poor country, if possible, from undergoing a general sentence of transportation.—Be pleased to come along with me, gentlemen—I'll satisfy you. *[Exit.]*

Leech. Well, master! I wish you joy.—You can't say but we behaved to you like gemmen!— *[Exit Bailiffs.]*

Leef. And if you were all three in the cart, I don't know which of you I wou'd wish to have respited from execution; I have play'd Mr. Torrington a little trick, Connolly, but the moment I come back I shall recover my reputation, if I even put myself voluntarily into the hands of these worthy gentlemen.— *[Exit.]*

Con. Musha! long life to you old Shillaley; I don't wonder at your being afraid of a prison, for 'tis to be sure a blessed place to live in!—And now let my thick skull consider if there's any way of preventing this infernal duel.—Suppose I have him bound over to the peace!—No, that will never do: it would be a shameful thing for a gentleman to keep the peace! besides, I must appear in the business, and people may then think from my connection with him, that he has'n't honour enough to throw away his life!—Suppose I go another way to work, and send an anonymous letter about the affair to Mrs. Belville; they say, tho' she is a woman of quality, that no creature upon earth can be fonder of her husband!—Surely the good genius of Ireland put this scheme in my head.—I'll about it this minute, and if there's but one of them kept from the field, I don't think that the other can be much hurt, when there will be nobody to fight with him. *[Exit.]*

SCENE changes to Capt. SAVAGE's Lodgings.

Enter Captain SAVAGE and BELVILLE.

Capt. Why, faith, Belville, your detection, and so speedily too, after all the pretended sanctity of the morning, must have thrown you into a most humiliating situation.

Bel. Into the most distressing you can imagine: had my wife raved at my falsehood, in the customary manner, I could have brazen'd it out pretty tolerably; but the angel-like sweetness, with which she

bore the mortifying discovery, planted daggers in my bosom, and made me at that time wish her the veriest vixen in the whole creation.

Capt. Yet, the suffering forbearance of a wife, is a quality for which she is seldom allowed her merit; we think it her duty to put up with our falsehood, and imagine ourselves exceedingly generous in the main, if we practise no other method of breaking her heart.

Bel. Monstrous! monstrous! from this moment I bid an everlasting adieu to my vices: the generosity of my dear girl—

Enter a Servant to BELVILLE.

Ser. Here's a letter, Sir, which Mr. Spruce has brought you.

Bel. Give me leave, Savage—Zounds! what an industrious devil the father of darkness is, when the moment a man determines upon a good action, he sends such a thing as this, to stagger his resolution.

Capt. What have you got there?

Bel. You shall know presently. Will you let Spruce come in?

Capt. Where have you acquired all this ceremony?

Bel. Bid Spruce come in.

Ser. Yes, Sir.

Capt. Is that another challenge?

Bel. 'Tis upon my soul, but it came from a beautiful enemy, and dares me to give a meeting to Miss Walsingham.

Capt. How!

Enter SPRUCE.

Bel. Pray, Spruce, who gave you this letter?

Spruce. Miss Walsingham's woman, Sir: she said it was about very particular business, and therefore I wouldn't trust it by any of the footmen.

Capt. O, damn your diligence. *[aside.]*

Bel. You may go home, Spruce.

Spruce. *[looking significantly at his master.]* Is there no answer necessary, Sir?

Bel. I shall call at home myself, and give the necessary answer.

Spruce. *[aside.]* What can be the matter with him all on a sudden, that he is so cold upon the scent of wickedness? *[Exit.]*

Capt.

Capt. And what answer do you propose making to it, Belville?

Bel. Read the letter, and then tell me what I shou'd do—You know Miss Walsingham's hand.

Capt. O perfectly!—This is not—yes, it is her hand!—I have too many curst occasions to know it. [*aside.*]

Bel. What are you muttering about?—Read the letter.

Capt. If you are not entirely discouraged, by our last conversation, from renewing the subject which then gave offence.

Bel. Which then gave offence.—You see, Savage, that it is not offensive any longer.

Capt. S'death! you put me out—You may at the masquerade, this evening—

Bel. You remember how earnest she was for the masquerade party.

Capt. Yes, yes, I remember it well:—and I remember, also, how hurt she was this morning, about the affair of Miss Leeson. [*aside.*]—have an opportunity of entertaining me—O the strumpet! [*aside.*]

Bel. But mind the cunning with which she signs the note, for fear it shou'd by any accident fall into improper hands.

Capt. Ay, and you put it into very proper hands. [*aside.*] I shall be in the blue domino.—The signature is— YOU KNOW WHO.

Bel. Yes, you know who.

Capt. May be, however, she has only written this to try you.

Bel. To try me, for what purpose? But if you read a certain post-script there, I fancy you will be of a different opinion.

Capt. If Mr. Belville has any house of character to retire to, it wou'd be most agreeable, as there cou'd be no fear of interruption.

Bel. What do you say now?—Can you recommend me to any house of character, where we shall be free from interruption.

Capt. O, curse her house of character! [*aside.*] But surely, Belville, after your late determined resolution to reform—

Bel. Zounds! I forgot that.

Capt. After the unexampled sweetness of your wife's behaviour—

Bel. Don't go on, Savage: there is something here [*putting his hand upon his bosom*] which feels already not a little awkwardly.

Capt. And can you still persist?

Bel. I am afraid to answer your question.

THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES:

Capt. Where the plague are you flying?

Bel. From the justice of your censure, Horace; my own is sufficiently severe; yet I see that I shall be a rascal again, in spite of my teeth; and good advice is only thrown away upon so incorrigible a libertine. *[Exit.]*

Capt. [alone.] So then, this diamond of mine proves a counterfeit after all, and I am really the veriest wretch existing at the moment in which I conceived myself the peculiar favourite of fortune. O the cursed, cursed sex! I'll see her once more to upbraid her with her falsehood, then acquaint my father with her perfidy, to justify my breaking off the marriage, and tear her from my thoughts for ever.

Enter a Servant.

Ser. Sir! Sir! Sir!—

Capt. Sir, Sir, Sir.—What the devil's the matter with the booby!

Ser. Miss Walsingham, Sir!

Capt. Ah! what of her?

Ser. Was this moment overturn'd at Mr. Belville's door; and John tells me carried in a fit into the house.

Capt. Ha! let me fly to her assistance. *[Exit.]*

Ser. Ha, let me fly to her assistance—O, are you thereabouts. *[Exit.]*

SCENE changes to Mr. BELVILLE'S.

Enter Mrs. BELVILLE, Miss WALSHINGHAM and Lady RACHAEL MILDEW.

Mrs. Bel. But are you indeed recover'd, my dear?

Miss Wal. Perfectly, my dear—I wasn't in the least hurt, though greatly terrified, when the two fools of coachmen contended for the honour of being first, and drove the carriages together with a violence incredible.

Lady Rach. I sincerely rejoice at your escape; and now Mrs. Belville, as you promised to chuse a dress for me if I went in your party to the masquerade this evening, can you spare a quarter of an hour to Tavistock-street?

Mrs. Bel. I am loth to leave Miss Walsingham alone, Lady Rachel, so soon after her fright.

Miss Wal. Nay, I insist that you don't stay at home upon my account; and Lady Rachael's company to the masquerade is a pleasure I have such an interest in, that I beg you won't delay a moment to oblige her.

Mrs. Bel. Well, then I attend your ladyship.

Lady Rach. You are very good; and so is Miss Walsingham. [*Exit.*]

Miss Wal. I wonder Captain Savage stays away so long! where can he be all this time?—I die with impatience to tell him of my happy interview with the General.

Enter a Servant.

Ser. Captain Savage, Madam.

Miss Wal. Shew him in. [*Exit Ser.*] How he must rejoice to find his conjectures so fortunately realized.

Enter Captain SAVAGE.

Capt. So, madam, you have just escaped a sad accident.

Miss Wal. And by that agreeable tone and countenance, one would almost imagine you were very sorry for my escape.

Capt. People, madam, who doubt the kindness of others, are generally conscious of some defect in themselves.

Miss Wal. Don't madam me, with this accent of indifference. What has put you out of humour?

Capt. Nothing.

Miss Wal. Are you indisposed?

Capt. The Crocodile! the Crocodile! [*aside.*]

Miss Wal. Do you go to the masquerade to-night?

Capt. No, but you do.

Miss Wal. Why not? Come, don't be ill-natured, I'm not your wife yet.

Capt. Nor ever will be, I promise you.

Miss Wal. What is the meaning of this very whimsical behaviour?

Capt. The settled composure of her impudence is intolerable. [*aside.*] Madam, madam, how have I deserved this usage?

Miss Wal. Nay, Sir, Sir, how have I deserved it, if you go to that?

Capt. The letter, madam!—the letter!

Miss

Miss Wal. What letter?

Capt. Your letter, inviting a gallant from the masquerade to a house of character, madam!—What, you appear surprised?

Miss Wal. Well I may, at so shameless an aspersión.

Capt. Madam, madam, I have seen your letter! Your new lover couldn't keep your secret a moment. But I have nothing to do with you,—and only come, to declare my reasons for renouncing you everlastingly!

Enter Servant.

Ser. General Savage, Madam.

Miss Wal. Shew him up. [*Exit Ser.*] I am glad he is come, Sir; inform him of your resolution to break off the match, and let there be an end of every thing between us.

Enter General Savage.

Gen. The news of your accident reach'd me but this moment, madam—or I should have posted much sooner to reconnoitre your situation. My aid de camp, however, has not been inattentive I see, and I dare say his diligence will not be the least lessen'd when he knows his obligations to you.

Capt. O, Sir, I am perfectly sensible of my obligations; and the consciousness of them, was one motive of my coming here.

Gen. Then you have made your acknowledgments to Miss Walsingham, I hope.

Miss Wal. He has indeed, General, said a great deal more than was necessary.

Gen. That opinion proceeds from the liberality of your temper; for 'tis impossible he can ever say enough of your goodness.

Capt. So it is; if you knew but all, Sir.

Gen. Why who can know more of the matter than myself?

Miss Wal. This gentleman, it seems, has something, General Savage, very necessary for your information.

Gen. How's this?

Capt. Nay, Sir, I only say, that for some particular reasons, which I shall communicate to you at a more proper time, I must beg leave

leave to decline the lady whose hand you kindly intended for me this morning.

Gen. O you must!—Why then I hope you decline at the same time, all pretension to every shilling of my fortune? It is not in my power to make you fight, you poltroon, but I can punish you for cowardice.

Miss Wal. Nay, but General, let me interpose here. If he can maintain any charge against the lady's reputation, 'twould be very hard that he should be disinherited for a necessary attention to his honour.

Capt. And if I don't make the charge good, I submit to be disinherited without murmuring.

Gen. 'Tis false as hell! the lady is infinitely too good for you, in every respect; and I undervalued her worth, when I thought of her for your wife.

Miss Wal. I am sure the lady is much obliged to your favourable opinion, Sir.

Gen. Not in the least, madam; I only do her common justice.

Capt. I cannot bear that you should be displeas'd a moment, Sir; suffer me therefore to render the conversation less equivocal, and a few words will explain every thing.

Gen. Sirrah, I'll hear no explanation; aren't my orders that you shou'd marry?

Miss Wal. For my sake hear him, General Savage.

Capt. Madam, I disdain every favour that is to be procured by your interposition.

[Exit.

Miss Wal. This matter must not be suffer'd to proceed farther tho', provokingly, cruelly as the Captain has behaved.

[aside.

Gen. What's that you say, my bewitching girl?

Miss Wal. I say that you must make it up with the Captain, and the best way will be to hear his charge patiently.

Gen. I am shocked at the brutality of the dog; he has no more principle than a futtler, and no more steadiness than a young recruit upon drill. But you shall have ample satisfaction:—this very day I'll cut him off from a possibility of succeeding to a shilling of my fortune. He shall be as miserable as—

Miss Wal. Dear General, do you think that this wou'd give me any satisfaction?

Gen. How he became acquainted with my design I know not, but I see plainly, that his mutiny proceeds from his aversion to my marrying again.

Miss Wal. To your marrying again, Sir! why shou'd he object to that?

Gen. Why, for fear I should have other children, to be sure.

Miss Wal. Indeed, Sir, it was not from that motive; and, if I can overlook his folly, you may be prevail'd upon to forgive it.

Gen. After what you have seen, justice shou'd make you a little more attentive to your own interest, my lovely girl.

Miss Wal. What, at the expence of his?

Gen. In the approaching change of your situation, there may be a family of your own.

Miss Wal. Suppose there shou'd, Sir; won't there be a family of his too?

Gen. I care not what becomes of his family.

Miss Wal. But, pray let me think a little about it, General.

Gen. 'Tis hard, indeed, when I was so desirous of promoting his happiness, that he shou'd throw any thing in the way of mine.

Miss Wal. Recollect Sir, his offence was wholly confined to me.

Gen. Well, my love, and isn't it throwing an obstacle in the way of my happiness, when he abuses you so grossly for your readiness to marry me.

Miss Wal. Sir!—

Gen. I see with all your good nature, that this is a question you cannot rally against.

Miss Wal. It is indeed, Sir.—What will become of me? *[aside.]*

Gen. You seem suddenly disorder'd, my love?

Miss Wal. Why really, Sir, this affair affects me strongly.

Gen. Well, it is possible, that for your sake, I may not punish him with as much severity as I intended: in about an hour I shall beg leave to beat up your quarters again, with Mr. Torrington; for 'tis necessary I should shew you some proof of my gratitude, since you have been so kindly pleased to honour me with a proof of your affection.

Miss

Miss Wal. [*aside*.] So, now indeed, we're in a hopeful situation.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE changes to TORRINGTON'S Chambers in the Temple.

Enter TORRINGTON, LEECH, CROW, and WOLF.

Tor. Walk in, gentlemen—A good pretty young man that, we parted with just now—Pray, gentlemen, be seated—

Leech. He is indeed a very pretty young man.

Crow. And knows how to do a genteel thing—

Wolf. As handsome as any body.

Tor. There is a rectitude besides in his polemical principles.

Leech. In what, Sir?

Tor. His polemical principles.

Crow. What are they, Sir?

Tor. I beg pardon, gentlemen, you are not sufficiently intimate with the English language, to carry on a conversation in it.

Wolf. Yes, we are, Sir.

Tor. Because, if it is more agreeable to you, we'll talk in Latin.

Leech. We don't understand Latin, Sir.

Tor. I thought you generally convers'd in that language abroad:

Crow. No, nor at home neither, Sir: there is a language we sometimes talk in, called Slang.

Tor. A species of the ancient Slavonic I suppose.

Leech. No, it's a little rum tongue that we understand among von another—

Tor. I never heard of it before—But to business, gentlemen—the constitution of your country is at present very deplorable, I hear.

Wolf. Why indeed, Sir, there never was a greater cry against people in our way.

Tor. But you have laws, I suppose, for the regulation of your trade.

Leech. To be sure we have, Sir: nevertheless we find it very difficult to carry it on.

Crow. We are harass'd with so many oppressions—

Tor. What, by the Prussian troops?—

Crow. The Prussian troops, Sir—Lord bless you, no: by the courts of law; if we make never so small mistake in our duties.

M m

Tor.

Tor. Then your duties are very high, or very numerous—

Leech. I am afraid we don't understand one another, Sir—

Tor. I am afraid so too—Pray where are your papers, gentlemen?—

Leech. Here's all the papers we have, Sir—You'll find every thing right—

Tor. I dare say I shall. [*Reads.*] *Middlesex to wit*—Why this is a warrant from the Sheriff's office to arrest somebody.

Crow. To be sure it is, Sir—

Tor. And what do you give it to me for?

Wolf. To shew that we have done nothing contrary to law, Sir.

Tor. Who supposes that you have.

Leech. Only because you ask'd for our papers, Sir.

Tor. Why what has this to do with them?

Crow. Why that's the warrant for arresting the young gentleman.

Tor. What young gentleman?

Wolf. Lord bless your heart, Sir; that stopp'd you in the street, and that you bail'd for the hundred and seventy pounds.

Tor. I bail'd for an hundred and seventy pounds!

Leech. Sure, Sir, you told me to follow you to chambers, and you wou'd satisfy us.

Tor. Pray hear me, Sir,—aren't you a trader of Dantzick?

Leech. I a trader! I am no trader, nor did I ever before hear of any such place.

Tor. Perhaps this gentleman is—

Crow. Lord help your head, I was born in Clare-market, and never was farther out of town in my life than Brentford, to attend the Sheriff at the Middlesex election.

Tor. And it may be that you don't want to be naturaliz'd?

[*To Wolf.*]

Wolf. For what, my Master? I am a Liveryman of London already, and have a vote besides for the four counties.

Tor. Well, gentlemen, having been so good as to tell me what you are not, add a little to the obligation, and tell me what you are?

Leech. Why, Sir, the warrant we have shew'd you, tells that we are sheriff's officers.

Tor. Sheriff's officers are you—O-ho—Sheriff's officers—then I suppose you must be three very honest gentlemen.

Crow. Sir!—we are as honest—

Tor. As sheriff's officers usually are.—Yet cou'd you think of nobody, but a man of the law, for the object of your conspiracy?

Leech. Sir, we don't understand what you mean?

Tor. But I understand what you mean, and therefore I'll deal with you properly.

Wolf. I hope, Sir, you'll pay us the money, for we can't go 'till the affair is certainly settled in some manner.

Tor. O, you can't—why then I'll pay you.—But it shall be in a coin you won't like, depend upon it.—Here, Mr. Molesworth—

Enter MOLESWORTH.

Tor. Make out mittimus for the commitment of these three fellows, they are disguised to defraud people; but I am in the commission for Middlesex, and I'll have you all brought to justice.—I will teach you to go masquerading about the the streets.—So take them along, Mr. Molesworth.

Leech. We don't fear your mittimus.

Crow. We'll put in bail directly, and try it with you, tho' you are a great lawyer.

Wolf. He'll make a flat of himself in this Nantzick affair.

Tor. Mighty well—And, if I find the young barrister, he may, perhaps, take a trip to the barbarous borders of the Ohio, from the beautiful banks of the Thames.

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

ACT

ACT

A C T IV.

S C E N E, *an Apartment at BELVILLE'S.**Enter Mrs. BELVILLE, and Captain SAVAGE.*

Mrs. Bel. **D**ON'T argue with me, Captain Savage; but consider that I am a wife, and pity my distraction.

Capt. Dear Madam, there is no occasion to be so much alarmed; Mr. Belville has very properly determined not to fight; he told me so himself, and should have been effectually prevented, if I hadn't known his resolution.

Mrs. Bel. There is no knowing to what extremities he may be provoked, if he meets Mr. Leeson; I have sent for you, therefore, to beg that you will save him from the possibility, either of exposing himself to any danger, or of doing an injury to his adversary.

Capt. What would you have me do, Madam?

Mrs. Bel. Fly to Hyde Park, and prevent, if yet possible, his meeting with Mr. Leeson: do it, I conjure you, if you'd save me from desperation.

Capt. Though you have no reason whatever to be apprehensive for his safety, Madam, yet, since you are so very much affected, I'll immediately execute your commands. [Exit.]

Mrs. Bel. Merciful Heaven! where is the generosity, where is the sense, where is the shame of men, to find a pleasure in pursuits which they cannot remember without the deepest horror; which they cannot follow without the meanest fraud? and which they cannot effect without consequences the most dreadful? The single word Pleasure, in a masculine sense, comprehends every thing that is cruel; every thing that is base; and every thing that is desperate: Yet men, in other respects the noblest of their species, make it the principal business of their lives, and do not hesitate to break in upon the peace of the happiest families, though their own must be necessarily exposed to destruction.—O Belville! Belville!—my life! my love!—The greatest crime which a libertine can ever experience, is too despicable to be envied; 'tis at best
nothing

nothing but a victory over his own humanity ; and if he is a husband, he must be dead indeed, if he is not doubly tortured upon the wheel of recollection.

Enter Miss WALSINGHAM and Lady RACHEL MILDEW.

Miss Wal. My dear Mrs. Belville, I am extremely unhappy to see you so distressed.

Lady Rach. Now I am extremely glad to see her so, for if she wasn't greatly distressed it would be monstrously unnatural.

Mrs. Bel. O, Matilda!—my husband! my husband! my children! my children!

Miss Wal. Don't weep, my dear! don't weep! pray be comforted, all may end happily. Lady Rachel, beg of her not to cry so.

Lady Rach. Why, you are crying yourself, Miss Walsingham ; and though I think it out of character to encourage her tears, I can't help keeping you company.

Mrs. Bel. O, why is not some effectual method contrived, to prevent this horrible practice of duelling?

Lady Rach. I'll expose it on the stage, since the law now-a-days kindly leaves the whole cognizance of it to the theatre.

Miss Wal. And yet if the laws against it were as well enforced as the laws against destroying the game, perhaps it would be equally for the benefit of the kingdom.

Mrs. Bel. No law will ever be effectual till the custom is rendered infamous.—Wives must shriek!—mothers must agonize!—orphans must multiply! unless some blessed hand strips the fascinating glare from honourable murder, and bravely exposes the idol who is worshipp'd thus in blood. While it is disreputable to obey the laws, we cannot look for reformation:—But if the duellist is once banished from the presence of his sovereign;—if he is for life excluded the confidence of his country;—if a mark of indelible disgrace is stamp'd upon him, the sword of public justice will be the sole chastiser of wrongs; trifles will not be punish'd with death, and offences really meriting such a punishment will be reserved for the only proper avenger, the common executioner.

Lady

Lady Rach. I cou'dn't have expressed myself better on the subject, my dear: but till such a hand as you talk of is found, the best will fall into the error of the times.

Miss Wal. Yes, and butcher each other like madmen, for fear their courage should be suspected by fools.

Mrs. Bel. No news yet from Captain Savage?

Lady Rach. He can't have reached Hyde-Park yet, my dear.

Miss Wal. Let us lead you to your chamber, my dear; you'll be better there.

Mrs. Bel. Matilda, I must be wretched any where; but I'll attend you.

Lady Rach. Thank Heaven, I have no husband to plunge into such a situation!

Miss Wal. And, if I thought I could keep my resolution, I'd determine this moment on living single all the days of my life. Pray don't spare my arm, my dear. [Exeunt.

S C E N E, *Hyde-Park.*

Enter BELVILLE.

Bel. I fancy I am rather before the time of appointment; engagements of this kind are the only ones, in which, now-a-days, people pretend to any punctuality:—a man is allowed half an hour's law to dinner, but a thrust through the body must be given within a second of the clock.

Enter LEESON.

Leef. Your servant, Sir.—Your name I suppose is Belville?

Bel. Your supposition is very right, Sir; and I fancy I am not much in the wrong, when I suppose your name to be Leeson.

Leef. It is, Sir; I am sorry I should keep you here a moment.

Bel. I am very sorry, Sir, you shou'd bring me here at all.

Leef. I regret the occasion, be assured, Sir; but 'tis not now a time for talking, we must proceed to action.

Bel. And yet talking is all the action I shall proceed to, depend upon it.

Leef.

Leef. What do you mean, Sir? Where are your pistols?

Bel. Where I intend they shall remain till my next journey into the country, very quietly over the chimney in my dressing-room.

Leef. You treat this matter with too much levity, Mr. Belville; take your choice of mine, Sir.

Bel. I'd rather take them both, if you please, for then no mischief shall be done with either of them.

Leef. Sir, this trifling is adding insult to injury; and shall be resented accordingly. Didn't you come here to give me satisfaction?

Bel. Yes, every satisfaction in my power.

Leef. Take one of these pistols then.

Bel. Come, Mr. Leeson, your bravery will not at all be lessened by the exercise of a little understanding: If nothing less than my life can atone for the injury I have unconsciously done you, fire at me instantly, but don't be offended because I decline to do you an additional wrong.

Leef. S'death, Sir, do you think I come here with an intention to murder?

Bel. You come to arm the guilty against the innocent, Sir; and that, in my opinion, is the most atrocious intention of murder.

Leef. How's this?—

Bel. Look'e, Mr. Leeson, there's your pistol—[*throws it on the ground.*] I have already acted very wrongly with respect to your sister; but, Sir, I have some character (though perhaps little enough) to maintain, and I will not do a still worse action, in raising my hand against your life.

Leef. This hypocritical cant of cowardice, Sir, is too palpable to disarm my resentment; though I held you to be a man of profligate principles, I nevertheless considered you as a man of courage; but, if you hesitate a moment longer, by Heaven I'll chastise you on the spot.

[*draws.*

Bel. I must defend my life; though, if it did not look like timidity, I would inform you—[*they fight, Leeson is disarmed.*—Mr. Leeson, there is your sword again.

Leef. Strike it through my bosom, Sir;—I don't desire to out-live this instant.

Bel.

Bel. I hope, my dear Sir, that you will long live happy—as your sister, though to my shame I can claim no merit on that account, is recovered unpolluted, by her family; but let me beg that you will now see the folly of decisions by the sword, when success is not fortunately chained to the side of justice: before I leave you, receive my sincerest apologies for the injuries I have done you; and, be assured, no occurrence will ever give me greater pleasure, than an opportunity of serving you, if, after what is past, you shall at any time condescend to use me as a friend.

[*Exit.*

Leef. Very well—very well—very well.

Enter CONNOLLY.

Leef. What, you have been within hearing I suppose?

Con. You may say that.

Leef. And isn't this very fine?

Con. Why, I can't say so much to the finery of it, Sir, but it is very foolish.

Leef. And so this is my satisfaction after all!

Con. And pretty satisfaction it is. When Mr. Belville did you but one injury, he was the greatest villain in the world; but now that he has done you two, in drawing his sword upon you, I suppose he is a very worthy gentleman.

Leef. To be foil'd, baffled, disappointed in my revenge!—What tho' my sister is by accident unstain'd, his intentions are as criminal as if her ruin was actually perpetrated; there is no possibility of enduring this reflection!—I wish not for the blood of my enemy, but I would at least have the credit of giving him life.

Con. Arrah, my dear, if you had any regard for the life of your enemy, you shou'dn't put him in the way of death.

Leef. No more of these reflections, my dear Connolly; my own feelings are painful enough. Will you be so good as take these damn'd pistols, and come with me to the coach?

Con. Troth, and that I will; but don't make yourself uneasy; consider that you have done every thing which honour required at your hands.

Leef.

Leef. I hope so.

Con. Why, you know so: you have broke the laws of Heaven and earth as nobly as the first lord in the land, and you have convinced the world, that where any body has done your family one injury, you have courage enough to do it another yourself, by hazarding your life.

Leef. Those, Connolly, who would live reputably in any country, must regulate their conduct in many cases by its very prejudices.—Custom, with respect to duelling, is a tyrant, whose despotism no body ventures to attack, though every body detests its cruelty.

Con. I didn't imagine that a tyrant of any kind would be tolerated in England. But where do you think of going now? For chambers, you know, will be most delightfully dangerous, till you have come to an explanation with Mr. Torrington.

Leef. I shall go to Mrs. Crayons.

Con. What, the gentlewoman that paints all manner of colours in red chalk?

Leef. Yes, where I first became acquainted with Emily.

Con. And where the sweet creature has met you two or three times, under pretence of sitting for her picture.

Leef. Mrs. Crayona will, I dare say, oblige me in this exigency with an apartment for a few days. I shall write, from her house, a full explanation of my conduct to Mr. Torrington, and let him know where I am; for the honest old man must not be the smallest sufferer, though a thousand prisons were to stare me in the face—But come, Connolly, we have no time to lose.—Yet if you had any prudence you would abandon me in my present situation.

Con. Ah, Sir, is this your opinion of my friendship? Do you think that any thing can ever give me half so much pleasure in serving you, as seeing you surrounded by misfortunes? [Exeunt.

S C E N E *changes to an Apartment at BELVILLE'S.*

Enter General SAVAGE, TORRINGTON, and SPRUCE.

Spruce. Miss Walsingham will wait upon you immediately, gentlemen.

Gen. Very well.

N n

Spruce.

Spruce. [*aside.*] What can old Holifernes want so continually with Miss Walsingham? *Exit.*

Gen. When I bring this sweet mild creature home, I shall be able to break her spirit to my own wishes—I'll inure her to proper discipline from the first moment, and make her tremble at the very thought of mutiny.

Tor. Ah, General, you are wonderfully brave, when you know the meekness of your adversary.

Gen. Envy, Torrington—stark, staring envy: few fellows, on the borders of fifty, have so much reason as myself, to boast of a blooming young woman's partiality.

Tor. On the borders of fifty, man!—beyond the confines of threescore.

Gen. The more reason I have to boast of my victory then; but don't grumble at my triumph: you shall have a kiss of the bride, let that content you, Torrington.

Enter Miss WALSINGHAM.

Miss Wal. Gentlemen, your most obedient; General, I intended writing to you about a trifling mistake; but poor Mrs. Belville has been so very ill, that I couldn't find an opportunity.

Gen. I am very sorry for Mrs. Belville's illness, but I am happy, Madam, to be personally in the way of receiving your commands, and I wait upon you with Mr. Torrington, to talk about a marriage settlement.

Miss Wal. Heavens! how shall I undeceive him? [*aside.*]

Tor. 'Tis rather an awkward business, Miss Walsingham, to trouble you upon; but as the General wishes that the affair may be as private as possible, he thought it better to speak to yourself, than to treat with any other person.

Gen. Yes, my lovely girl; and to convince you that I intended to carry on an honourable war, not to pillage like a free-booter, Mr. Torrington will be a trustee.

Miss Wal. I am infinitely obliged to your intention, but there's no necessity of talking about my settlement—for—

Gen. Pardon me, Madam,—pardon me, there is—besides, I have determined there shall be one, and what I once determine is absolute.—

A to—

A tolerable hint for her own behaviour, when I have married her, Torrington.

Miss Wal. I must not shock him before Mr. Torrington [*aside*]. General Savage, will you give me leave to speak a few words in private to you?

Gen. There is no occasion for founding a retreat, Madam; Mr. Torrington is acquainted with the whole business, and I am determined for your sake, that nothing shall be done without him.

Tor. I can have no objection to your hearing the lady *ex parte*, General.

Miss Wal. What I have to say, Sir, is of a very particular nature.

Tor. [*rising*] I'll leave the room then.

Gen. [*opposing him*] You sha'n't leave the room, Torrington. Miss Wallingham shall have a specimen of my command, even before marriage, and you shall see that every woman is not to bully me out of my determination.

Miss Wal. Well, General, you must have your own way.

Gen. [*to Tor.*] Don't you see that 'tis only fighting the battle stoutly at first, with one of these gentle creatures?

Tor. [*significantly*] Ah, General!

Gen. I own, Madam, your situation is a distressing one; let us sit down—let us sit down—

Miss Wal. It is unspeakably distressing indeed, Sir.

Tor. Distressing, however, as it may be, we must proceed to issue, Madam; the General proposes your jointure to be 1000*l.* a-year.

Miss Wal. General Savage!

Gen. You think this is too little, perhaps?

Miss Wal. I can't think of any jointure, Sir.

Tor. Why to be sure, a jointure is at best but a melancholy possession, for it must be purchased by the loss of the husband you love.

Miss Wal. Pray don't name it, Mr. Torrington.

Gen. (*kissing her hand*) A thousand thanks to you, my lovely girl.

Miss Wal. For Heaven's sake, let go my hand.

Gen. I shall be mad till it gives me a legal possession of the town.

Miss Wal. Gentlemen—General—Mr. Torrington—I beg you'll hear me.

Gen. By all means, my adorable creature; I can never have too many proofs of your disinterested affection.

Miss Wal. There is a capital mistake in this whole affair—I am sinking under a load of distress.

Gen. Your confusion makes you look charmingly though.

Miss Wal. There is no occasion to talk of jointures or marriages to me; I am not going to be married.

Tor. What's this?

Miss Wal. Nor have I an idea in nature, however enviable I think the honour, of being your wife, Sir.

Gen. Madam!

Tor. Why here's a demur!

Miss Wal. I am afraid, Sir, that in our conversation this morning, my confusion, arising from the particularity of the subject, has led you into a material misconception.

Gen. I am thunder-struck, Madam! I couldn't mistake my ground.

Tor. As clear a *nol. prof.* as ever was issued by an attorney-general.

Gen. Surely you can't forget, that at the first word you hung out a flag of truce, told me even that I had a previous friend in the fort, and didn't so much as hint a single article of capitulation?

Tor. Now for the rejoinder to this replication.

Miss Wal. All this is unquestionably true, General, and perhaps a good deal more; but in reality my confusion before you on this subject to-day was such, that I scarcely knew what I said; I was dying with distress, and at this moment am very little better;—permit me to retire, General Savage, and only suffer me to add, that though I think myself highly flatter'd by your addresses, it is impossible for me ever to receive them. Lord! Lord! I am glad 'tis over in any manner. [Exit.

Tor. Why, we are a little out of this matter, General; the judge has decided against us, when we imagined ourselves sure of the cause.

Gen. The gates shut in my teeth, just as I expected the keys from the governor.

Tor. I am disappointed myself, man; I sha'n't have a kiss of the bride.

Gen. At my time of life too!

Tor. I said from the first you were too old for her.

Gen. Zounds, to fancy myself sure of her, and to triumph upon a certainty of victory!

Tor. Ay, and to kiss her hand in a rapturous return for her tenderness to you:—let me advise you never to kiss before folks, as long as you live again.

Gen. Don't distract me, Torrington! a joke, where a friend has the misfortune to lose the battle, is a downright inhumanity.

Tor. You told me that your son had accused her of something that you would not hear; suppose we call at his lodgings, he perhaps, as an *amicus curiæ*, may be able to give us a little information.

Gen. Thank you for the thought:—But keep your finger more than ever upon your lips, dear Torrington. You know how I dread the danger of ridicule, and it would be too much, not only to be thrash'd out of the field, but to be laugh'd at into the bargain.

Tor. I thought when you made a presentment of your sweet person to Miss Walsingham, that the bill wou'd be return'd ignoramus.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE, BELVILLE'S.

Mrs. BELVILLE and Lady RACHEL MILDEW, discovered on a Sofa.

Lady Rach. You heard what Captain Savage said?

Mrs. Bel. I would flatter myself, but my heart will not suffer it; the Park might be too full for the horrid purpose, and perhaps they are gone to decide the quarrel in some other place.

Lady Rach. The Captain enquired of numbers in the Park without hearing a syllable of them, and is therefore positive that they are parted without doing any mischief.

Mrs. Bel. I am, nevertheless, torn by a thousand apprehensions; and my fancy, with a gloomy kind of fondness, fastens on the most deadly. This very morning, I exultingly numbered myself in the catalogue of the happiest wives—Perhaps I am a wife no longer;—perhaps, my little innocents, your unhappy father is at this moment breathing his last sigh, and wishing, O, how vainly! that he had not preferr'd a guilty pleasure to his own life, to my eternal peace of mind, and your felicity!

[*Enter*

Enter SPRUCE.

Spruce. Madam! madam! my master! my master!

Mrs. Bel. Is he safe!

Enter BELVILLE.

Bel. My love!

Mrs. Bel. O, Mr. Belville!

[*Faints.*

Bel. Assistance, quick!

Lady Rach. There she revives.

Bel. The angel softness! how this rends my heart!

Mrs. Bel. O, Mr. Belville, if you could conceive the agonies I have endured, you would avoid the possibility of another quarrel as long as you lived, out of common humanity.

Bel. My dearest creature, spare these tender reproaches; you know not how sufficiently I am punish'd to see you thus miserable.

Lady Rach. That's pleasant indeed, when you have yourself deliberately loaded her with affliction.

Bel. Pray, pray Lady Rachel, have a little mercy: Your poor humble servant has been a very naughty boy,—but if you only forgive him this single time, he will never more deserve the rod of correction.

Mrs. Bel. Since you are return'd safe, I am happy. Excuse these foolish tears, they gush in spite of me.

Bel. How contemptible do they render me, my love!

Lady Rach. Come, my dear, you must turn your mind from this gloomy subject.—Suppose we step up stairs, and communicate our pleasure to Miss Walsingham?

Mrs. Bel. With all my heart. Adieu, recreant!

[*Exeunt Mrs. Bel. and Lady Rach.*

Bel. I don't deserve such a woman, I don't deserve her.—Yet, I believe I am the first husband that ever found fault with a wife for having too much goodness.

Enter SPRUCE.

What's the matter?

Spruce. Your sister—

Bel. What of my sister?

Spruce. Sir, is eloped.

Bel. My sister!

Spruce. There is a letter left, Sir, in which she says, that her motive was a dislike to match with Captain Savage, as she has placed her affections unalterably on another gentleman.

Bel. Death and damnation!

Spruce. Mrs. Moreland, your mother, is in the greatest distress, Sir, and begs you will immediately go with the servant that brought the message; for he, observing the young lady's maid carrying some bundles out, a little suspiciously, thought there must be some scheme going on, and dogg'd a hackney coach, in which Miss Moreland went off to the very house where it set her down.

Bel. Bring me to the servant, instantly!—but don't let a syllable of this matter reach my wife's ears, her spirits are already too much agitated. [Exit.]

Spruce. Zounds! we shall be paid home for the tricks we have play'd in other families. [Exit.]

SCENE changes to Capt. SAVAGE's Lodgings.

Enter Captain SAVAGE.

Capt. The vehemence of my resentment against this abandon'd woman has certainly led me too far. I shou'dn't have acquainted her with my discovery of her baseness?—no, if I had acted properly, I should have conceal'd all knowledge of the transaction till the very moment of her guilt, and then burst upon her when she was solacing with her paramour, in all the fulness of security. Now, if she should either alter her mind, with respect to going to the masquerade, or go in a different habit to elude my observation, I not only lose the opportunity of exposing her, but give her time to plan some plausible excuse for her infamous letter to Belville.

Enter a Servant.

Ser. General Savage and Mr. Torrington, Sir.

Capt. You blockhead, why did you let them wait a moment? What can be the meaning of this visit? [Exit Ser.]

Enter

THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES:

Enter General SAVAGE and TORRINGTON.

Gen. I come, Horace, to talk to you about Miss Walsingham.

Capt. She's the most worthless woman existing, Sir: I can convince you of it.

Gen. I have already changed my own opinion of her.

Capt. What you have found her out yourself, Sir?

Tor. Yes, he has made a trifling discovery.

Gen. S'death, don't make me contemptible to my son. [*Aside to Tor.*

Capt. But, Sir, what instance of her precious behaviour has come to your knowledge? For an hour has scarcely elapsed, since you thought her a miracle of goodness.

Tor. Ay, he has thought her a miracle of goodness, within this quarter of an hour.

Gen. Why she has a manner that would impose upon all the world.

Capt. Yes, but she has a manner also to undeceive the world thoroughly.

Tor. That we have found pretty recently; however, in this land of liberty, none are to be pronounced guilty, till they are positively convicted; I can't therefore find against Miss Walsingham, upon the bare strength of presumptive evidence.

Capt. Presumptive evidence! hav'n't I promis'd you ocular demonstration?

Tor. Ay, but 'till we receive this demonstration, my good friend, we cannot give judgment.

Capt. Then I'll tell you at once, who is the object of her honourable affections.

Gen. Who—who—

Capt. What would you think if they were placed on Belville?

Gen. Upon Belville! has she deserted to him from the corps of virtue?

Capt. Yes, she wrote to him, desiring to be taken from the masquerade to some convenient scene of privacy, and tho' I have seen the letter, she has the impudence to deny her own hand.

Gen. What a fiend is there then disguised under the uniform of an angel!

Tor.

Tor. The delicate creature that was dying with confusion!

Capt. Only come with me to the masquerade, and you shall see Belville carry her off: 'Twas about the scandalous appointment with him, I was speaking, when you conceived I treated her so rudely.

Gen. And you were only anxious to shew her in her real character to me, when I was so exceedingly offended with you.

Capt. Nothing else in the world, Sir; I knew you would despise and detest her, the moment you were acquainted with her baseness.

Gen. How she brazen'd it out before my face, and what a regard she affected for your interest! I was a madman not to listen to your explanation.

Tor. Tho' you both talk this point well, I still see nothing but strong presumption against Miss Walsingham: mistakes have already happened, mistakes may happen again; and I will not give up a lady's honour, upon an evidence that wou'd not cast a common pick-pocket at the Old Bailey.

Capt. Come to the masquerade then and be convinced.

Gen. Let us detach a party for dresses immediately. Yet remember, Torrington, that the punctuality of evidence which is necessary in a court of law, is by no means requisite in a court of honour.

Tor. Perhaps it would be more to the honour of your honourable courts if it was. [*Exeunt.*

The Scene changes to an Apartment at Mrs. CRAYON'S.

Bel. [*behind.*] My dear, you must excuse me.

Maid. Indeed, Sir, you must not go up stairs.

Bel. Indeed but I will; the man is positive to the house, and I'll search every room in it, from the cellar to the garret, if I don't find the lady. James, don't stir from the street-door.

Enter BELVILLE followed by a Maid.

Maid. Sir, you are the strangest gentleman I ever met with in all my born days:—I wish my mistress was at home.

Bel. I am a strange fellow, my dear—But if your mistress was at home, I shou'd take the liberty of peeping into the apartments.

Maid. Sir, there's company in that room, you can't go in there.

Bel. Now, that's the very reason I will go in.

O o

Maid.

Maid. This must be some great man, or he wou'dn't behave so ob-
strepolous.

Bel. Good manners, by your leave a little. [*Forcing the door.*]
Whoever my gentleman is, I'll call him to a severe reckoning:—I have
just been called to one myself, for making free with another man's
sister.

Enter LEESON followed by CONNOLLY.

Leef. Who is it that dares commit an outrage upon this apartment?

Con. An Englishman's very lodging, ay, and an Irishman's too, I
hope, is his castle;—an Irishman is an Englishman all the world over.

Bel. Mr. Leeson!

Maid. O we shall have murder. [*Running off.*

Con. Run into that room, my dear, and stay with the young lady.

[*Exit Maid.*

Leef. And, Connolly, let nobody else into that room.

Con. Let me alone for that, honey, if this gentleman has fifty
people.

Leef. Whence is it, Mr. Belville, that you persecute me thus with
injuries!

Bel. I am fill'd with astonishment!

Con. Faith, to speak the truth, you do look a little surpris'd.

Leef. Answer me, Sir, what is the foundation of this new violence?

Bel. I am come, Mr. Leeson, upon an affair, Sir—

Con. The devil burn me if he was half so much confounded a while
ago, when there was a naked sword at his breast.

Bel. I am come, Mr. Leeson, upon an affair, Sir, that—How the
devil shall I open it to him, since the tables are so fairly turn'd
upon me?

Leef. Dispatch, Sir, for I have company in the next room.

Bel. A lady, I suppose?

Leef. Suppose it is, Sir?

Bel. And the lady's name is Moreland, isn't it, Sir?

Leef. I can't see what business you have with her name, Sir. You
took away my sister, and I hope you have no designs upon the lady in
the next room.

Bel. Indeed but I have.

Leef.

Leef. The devil you have!

Con. Well, this is the most unaccountable man I ever heard of, he'll have all the women in the town, I believe.

Leef. And pray, Sir, what pretensions have you to the lady in the next room, even supposing her to be Miss Moreland?

Bel. No other pretensions than what a brother should have to the defence of his sister's honour: You thought yourself authoris'd to cut my throat a while ago on a similar business.

Leef. And is Miss Moreland your sister?

Bel. Sir, there is insolence in this question; you know she is.

Leef. By Heaven, I did not know it till this moment; but I rejoice at the discovery: This is blow for blow!

Con. Devil burn me but they have fairly made a swop of it.

Bel. And you really didn't know that Miss Moreland was my sister?

Leef. I don't conceive myself under much necessity of apologizing to you, Sir; but I am incapable of a dishonourable design upon any woman; and tho' Miss Moreland, in our short acquaintance, repeatedly mentioned her brother, she never once told me that his name was Belville.

Con. And he has had such few opportunities of being in her company, unless by letters, honey, that he knew nothing more of her connections, than her being a sweet pretty creature, and having thirty thousand pounds.

Bel. The fortune, I dare say, no way lessened the force of her attractions.

Leef. I am above dissimulation—It really did not.

Bel. Well, Mr. Leeson, our families have shewn such a very strong inclination to come together, that it would really be a pity to disappoint them.

Con. Upon my soul and so it would; though the dread of being forced to have a husband, the young lady tells us, quicken'd her resolution to marry this gentleman.

Bel. O she had no violence of that kind to apprehend from her family; therefore, Mr. Leeson, since you seem as necessary for the girl's happiness as she seems for your's, you shall marry her here in town,

with the consent of all her friends, and save yourself the trouble of an expedition to Scotland.

Leef. Can I believe you serious?

Bel. Zounds, Leeson, that air of surprise is a sad reproach! I didn't surprise you when I did a bad action, but I raise your astonishment, when I do a good one.

Con. And by my soul, Mr. Belville, if you knew how a good action becomes a man, you'd never do a bad one as long as you lived.

Leef. You have given me life and happiness in one day, Mr. Belville! however, it is now time you shou'd see your sister; I know you'll be gentle with her, tho' you have so much reason to condemn her choice, and generously remember that her elopement proceeded from the great improbability there was of a beggar's ever meeting with the approbation of her family.

Bel. Don't apologize for your circumstances, Leeson; a princess could do no more than make you happy, and if you make her so, you meet her upon terms of the most perfect equality.

Leef. This is a new way of thinking, Mr. Belville.

Bel. 'Tis only an honest way of thinking; and I consider my sister a gainer upon the occasion; for a man of your merit is more difficult to be found, than a woman of her fortune.

[*Exeunt Leeson and Belville.*]

Con. What's the reason now that I can't skip and laugh, and rejoice, at this affair? Upon my soul my heart's as full as if I had met with some great misfortune. Well, pleasure in the extreme is certainly a very painful thing: I am really ashamed of these woman's drops, and yet I don't know but that I ought to blush for being ashamed of them, for I am sure nobody's eye ever looks half so well, as when it is disfigured by a tear of humanity.

[*Exit.*]

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

ACT

A C T V.

SCENE, a Drawing-Room.

Enter BELVILLE.

Bel. **W**ELL, happiness is once more mine, and the women are all going in tip-top spirits to the masquerade. Now, Mr. Belville, let me have a few words with you; Miss Walsingham, the ripe, the luxurious Miss Walsingham, expects to find you there burning with impatience:—But, my dear friend, after the occurrences of the day, can you be weak enough to plunge into fresh crimes? Can you be base enough to abuse the goodness of that angel your wife; and wicked enough, not only to destroy the innocence which is shelter'd beneath your own roof, but to expose your family perhaps again, to the danger of losing a son, a brother, a father, a husband? The possession of the Three Graces is surely too poor a recompence for the folly you must commit, for the shame you must feel, and the consequence you must hazard. Upon my soul if I struggle a little longer, I shall rise in my own opinion, and be less a rascal than I think myself:—Ay, but the object is bewitching;—the matter will be an eternal secret—and if it is known that I sneak in this pitiful manner from a fine woman, when the whole elysium of her person solicits me:—well, and am I afraid the world should know that I have shrunk from an infamous action?—A thousand blessings on you, dear conscience, for that one argument;—I shall be an honest man after all—Suppose, however, that I gave her the meeting? that's dangerous;—that's dangerous:—and I am so little accusom'd to do what is right, that I shall certainly do what is wrong, the moment I am in the way of temptation. Come, Belville, your resolution is not so very slender a dependence, and you owe Miss Walsingham reparation for the injury which you have done her principles. I'll give her the meeting—I'll take her to the house I intended—I'll—Zounds! what a fool I have been all this time, to look for a precarious satisfaction in vice, when there is such exquisite pleasure to be found at a certainty in virtue.

*[Exit.]**Enter*

THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES:

Enter Lady RACHEL and Mrs. BELVILLE.

Lady Rach. For mirth's sake don't let him see us: There has been a warm debate between his passion and his conscience.

Mrs. Bel. And the latter is the conqueror, my life for it.

Lady Rach. Dear Mrs. Belville, you are the best of women, and ought to have the best of husbands.

Mrs. Bel. I have the best of husbands.

Lady Rach. I have not time to dispute the matter with you now; but I shall put you into my comedy to teach wives, that the best receipt for matrimonial happiness, is to be deaf, dumb, and blind.

Mrs. Bel. Poh! poh! you are a satirist, Lady Rachel—But we are losing time; shou'dn't we put on our dresses, and prepare for the grand scene?

Lady Rach. Don't you tremble at the trial?

Mrs. Bel. Not in the least, I am sure my heart has no occasion.

Lady Rach. Have you let Miss Walsingham into our little plot?

Mrs. Bel. You know she cou'd not be insensible of Mr. Belville's design upon herself, and it is no farther than that design, we have any thing to carry into execution.

Lady Rach. Well, she may serve to facilitate the matter, and therefore I am not sorry that you have trusted her.

Mrs. Bel. We shall be too late, and then what signifies all your fine plotting.

Lady Rach. Is it not a little pang of jealousy that wou'd fain now quicken our motions?

Mrs. Bel. No, Lady Rachel, it is a certainty of my husband's love and generosity, that makes me wish to come to the trial. I would not exchange my confidence in his affections for all the mines of Peru; so nothing you can say will make me miserable.

Lady Rach. You are a most unaccountable woman; so away with you. [Exeunt.]

S C E N E *continued.*

Enter SPRUCE and GHASTLY.

Spruce. Why, Ghastly, the old general your master is a greater fool than I ever thought he was: He wants to marry Miss Walsingham?

Ghast.

Ghaft. Mrs. Tempest suspected that there was something going forward, by all his bugger-mugger consulting with Mr. Torrington; and so set me on to listen.

Spruce. She's a good friend of your's, and that thing she made the General give you the other day in the hospital, is I suppose a snug hundred a year.

Ghaft. Better than two; I wash for near four thousand people: there was a major of horse who put in for it, and pleaded a large family—

Spruce. With long services, I suppose.

Ghaft. Yes, but Mrs. Tempest insisted upon my long services; so the major was set aside—However, to keep the thing from the damn'd newspapers, I fancy he will succeed the barber, who died last night, poor woman, of a lying-in fever, after being brought to bed of three children.—Places in public institutions—

Spruce. Are often sweetly disposed: I think of asking Belville for something one of these days.

Ghaft. He has great interest.

Spruce. I might be a justice of peace, if I pleased, and in a shabby neighbourhood, where the mere swearing would bring in something tolerable; but there are so many strange people let into the commission now a-days, that I shou'dn't like to have my name in the list.

Ghaft. You are right.

Spruce. No, no, I leave that to poultry tradesmen, and shall think of some little sinecure, or a small pension on the Irish establishment.

Ghaft. Well, success attend you. I must hobble home as fast as I can, to know if Mrs. Tempest has any orders. O, there's a rare storm brewing for our old goat of a General.

Spruce. When shall we crack a bottle together?

Ghaft. O, I shan't touch a glass of claret these three weeks; for last night I gave nature a little fillip with a drunken bout, according to the doctor's directions; I have entirely left off bread, and I am in great hopes that I shall get rid of my gout by these means, especially if I can learn to eat my meat quite raw like a Cannibal.

Spruce. Ha, ha, ha!

Ghaft.

Ghaft. Look at me, Spruce, I was once as likely a young fellow as any under ground in the whole parish of St. James's:—but waiting on the General so many years.

Spruce. Ay, and following his example, Ghaftly.

Ghaft. 'Tis too true; has reduced me to what you see. These miserable spindles would do very well for a lord or a duke, Spruce; but they are a sad disgrace to a poor valet de chambre. *[Exit.*

Spruce. Well, I don't believe there's a gentleman's gentleman, within the weekly bills, who joins a prudent solicitude for the main chance, to a strict care of his constitution, better than myself. I have a little girl who stands me in about three guineas a week; I never bet more than a pound upon a rubber of whist; I always sleep with my head very warm; and swallow a new laid egg every morning with my chocolate. *[Exit.*

SCENE changes to the Street, two Chairs cross the Stage, knock at a Door, and set down BELVILLE and a Lady.

Bel. This way, my dear creature! *[Exeunt.*

Enter General SAVAGE, Captain SAVAGE, and TORRINGTON.

Capt. There! there they go in: You see the place is quite convenient, not twenty yards from the masquerade.

Gen. How closely the fellow sticks to her!

Tor. Like the great seal to the peerage patent of a chancellor. But, gentlemen, we have still no more than proof presumptive:—where is the ocular demonstration which we were to have?

Capt. I'll swear to the blue domino; 'tis a very remarkable one, and so is Belville's.

Tor. You would have rare custom among the Newgate solicitors, if you'd venture an oath upon the identity of the party under it.

Gen. 'Tis the very size and shape of Miss Walsingham.

Tor. And yet I have a strange notion that there is a trifling *alibi* in this case.

Gen. It wou'd be a damn'd affair if we should be countermined.

Capt. O, follow me, here's the door left luckily open, and I'll soon clear up the matter beyond a question. *[Enters the house.*

Tor.

Tor. Why your son is mad, General. This must produce a deadly breach with Belville. For Heaven's sake, let's go in and prevent any excesses of his rashness.

Gen. By all means, or the poor fellow's generous anxiety on my account may be productive of very fatal consequences. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE changes to an Apartment, BELVILLE unmasked, and a Lady in a blue domino masked.

Bel. My dear Miss Walsingham, we are now perfectly safe, yet I will by no means intreat you to unmask, because I am convinced, from the propriety with which you repuls'd my addresses this morning, that you intend the present interview should make me still more deeply sensible of my presumption.—I never lied so awkwardly in all my life; if it was to make her comply, I should be at no loss for language. [*aside.*] The situation in which I must appear before you, Madam, is certainly a very humiliating one; but I am persuaded that your generosity will be gratified to hear, that I have bid an everlasting adieu to my profligacy, and am now only alive to the virtues of Mrs. Belville.—She won't speak—I don't wonder at it, for brazen as I am myself, if I met so mortifying a rejection, I should be curstly out of countenance. [*aside.*]

Capt. [*behind.*] I will go in.

Gen. [*behind.*] I command you to desist.

Tor. [*behind.*] This will be an affair for the Old Bailey.

[*The noise grows more violent, and continues.*]

Bel. Why! what the devil is all this?—Don't be alarm'd, Miss Walsingham, be assured I'll protect you at the hazard of my life;—step into this closet,—you shan't be discovered depend upon it; [*she goes in*] And now to find out the cause of this confusion. [*unlocks the door.*]

Enter General SAVAGE, Captain SAVAGE, and TORRINGTON.

Bel. Savage! what is the meaning of this strange behaviour?

Capt. Where is Miss Walsingham?

Bel. So, then, Sir, this is a premeditated scheme, for which I am obliged to your friendship.

Capt. Where's Miss Walsingham, Sir?

P P

Gen.

Gen. Dear Belville, he is out of his senses; this storm was entirely against my orders.

Tor. If he proceeds much longer in these vagaries, we must amuse him with a commission of lunacy.

Bel. This is neither a time nor place for argument, Mr. Torrington; but as you and the General seem to be in the possession of your senses, I shall be glad if you'll take this very friendly gentleman away; and depend upon it, I sha'n't die in his debt for the present obligation.

Capt. And depend upon it, Sir, pay the obligation when you will, I sha'n't stir till I see Miss Walsingham.—Look'e, Belville, there are secret reasons for my behaving in this manner; reasons which you yourself will approve, when you know them;—my father here—

Gen. Disavows your conduct in every particular, and would rejoice to see you at the halberds.

Tor. And, for my part, I told him previously 'twas a downright burglary.

Bel. Well, gentlemen, let your different motives for breaking in upon me in this agreeable manner be what they may, I don't see that I am less annoyed by my friends than my enemy. I must therefore again request that you will all walk down stairs.

Capt. I'll first walk into this room.

Bel. Really, I think you will not.

Gen. What phrenzy possesses the fellow to urge this matter farther?

Capt. While there's a single doubt she triumphs over justice; [*drawing.*] I will go into that room.

Bel. Then you must make your way through me.

Enter Mrs. BELVILLE.

Mrs. Bel. Ah!

Capt. There, I knew she was in the room:—there's the blue domino.

Gen. Put up your sword, if you don't desire to be cashier'd from my favour for ever.

Bel. Why would you come out, Madam? But, you have nothing to apprehend.

Capt. Pray, Madam, will you have the goodness to unmask?

Bel. She sha'n't unmask.

Capt. I say she shall.

Bel. I say she shall not.

Mrs. Bel. Pray, let me oblige the gentlemen?

Capt. Death and destruction, here's a discovery!

Gen. and Tor. Mrs. Belville!

Mrs. Bel. Yes, Mrs. Belville, gentlemen: Is conjugal fidelity so very terrible a thing now-a-days that a man is to suffer death for being found in company with his wife?

Bel. My love, this is a surprise, indeed—But it is a most agreeable one; since you find me really ashamed of my former follies, and cannot now doubt the sincerity of my reformation.

Mrs. Bel. I am too happy! this single moment wou'd overpay a whole life of anxiety.

Bel. Where shall I attend you? Will you return to the masquerade?

Mrs. Bel. O no! Lady Rachel and Miss Walsingham are by this time at our house, with Mr. Leeson and the Irish gentleman whom you pressed into our party, impatiently expecting the result of this adventure.

Bel. Give me leave to conduct you home then from this scene of confusion. To-morrow, Captain Savage, I shall beg the favour of your explanation; [*aside to him as he goes out.*] Kind gentlemen, your most humble servant.

Mrs. Bel. And when you next disturb a *tête à tête*, for pity to a poor wife, don't let it be so very unc customary a party as the matrimonial one. [*Exeunt Bel. and Mrs. Bel.*]

Gen. [*to the Capt.*] So, Sir, you have led us upon a blessed expedition here.

Tor. Now don't you think that if your courts of honour, like our courts of law, searched a little minutely into evidence, it wou'd be equally to the credit of their understandings?

Capt. Though I am covered with confusion at my mistake (for you see Belville was mistaken as well as myself), I am overjoyed at this discovery of Miss Walsingham's innocence.

Gen. I should exult in it too, with a *feu de joy*, if it didn't now shew the impossibility of her ever being Mrs. Savage.

Capt. Dear Sir, why should you think that an impossibility? Though some mistakes have occurred in consequence, I suppose, of Mrs. Belville's little plot upon her husband, I dare say Miss Walsingham may yet be prevailed upon to come into our family.

Tor. Take care of a new error in your proceedings, young gentleman.

Gen. Ay, another defeat would make us completely despicable.

Capt. Sir, I'll forfeit my life, if she doesn't consent to the marriage this very night.

Gen. Only bring this matter to bear, and I'll forgive you every thing.

Tor. The Captain should be inform'd, I think, General, that she declined it peremptorily this evening.

Gen. Ay, do you hear that, Horace?

Capt. I am not at all surpris'd at it, considering the general misconception we laboured under. But I'll immediately to Belville's, explain the whole mystery, and conclude every thing to your satisfaction. [*Exit.*]

Gen. So, Torrington, we shall be able to take the field again, you see.

Tor. But how, in the name of wonder has your son found out your intention of marrying Miss Walsingham? I look'd upon myself as the only person acquainted with the secret.

Gen. That thought has march'd itself two or three times to my own recollection. For though I gave him some distant hints of the affair, I took particular care to keep behind the works of a proper circumspection.

Tor. O, if you give him any hints at all, I am not surpris'd at his discovering every thing.

Gen. I shall be all impatience till I hear of his interview with Miss Walsingham: Suppose, my dear friend, we went to Belville's, 'tis but in the next street, and we shall be there in the lighting of a match.

Tor. Really this is a pretty business for a man of my age and profession, trot here, trot there. But, as I have been weak enough to make myself a kind of party in the cause, I own that I have curiosity enough to be anxious about the determination.

Gen. Come along my old boy; and remember the song, "*Servile Spirits,*" &c. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE

SCENE changes to BELVILLE'S.

Enter Captain SAVAGE, and Miss WALSINGHAM.

Capt. Nay, but my dearest Miss Walsingham, the extenuation of my own conduct to Belville made it absolutely necessary for me to discover my engagements with you; and as happiness is now so fortunately in our reach, I flatter myself you will be prevail'd upon to forgive an error, which proceeded only from an extravagance of love.

Miss Wal. To think me capable of such an action, Captain Savage! I am terrified at the idea of a union with you; and it is better for a woman, at any time, to sacrifice an insolent lover, than to accept of a suspicious husband.

Capt. In the happiest unions, my dearest creature, there must be always something to overlook on both sides.

Miss Wal. Very civil, truly.

Capt. Pardon me, my life, for this frankness; and recollect, that if the lover has through misconception been unhappily guilty, he brings a husband altogether reform'd to your hands.

Miss Wal. Well, I see I must forgive you at last, so I may as well make a merit of necessity, you provoking creature.

Capt. And may I hope, indeed, for the blessing of this hand?

Miss Wal. Why, you wretch, would you have me force it upon you? I think, after what I have said, a soldier might have ventured to take it without farther ceremony.

Capt. Angelic creature! thus I seize it as my lawful prize.

Miss Wal. Well, but now you have obtain'd this inestimable prize, Captain, give me again leave to ask, if you have had a certain explanation with the General?

Capt. How can you doubt it?

Mrs. Wal. And he is really impatient for our marriage?

Capt. 'Tis incredible how earnest he is.

Miss Wal. What, did he tell you of his interview with me this evening when he brought Mr. Torrington?

Capt. He did.

Miss Wal. O, then, I can have no doubt.

Capt.

Capt. If a shadow of doubt remains, here he comes to remove it.
Joy, my dear Sir! joy a thousand times.

Enter General SAVAGE and TORRINGTON.

Gen. What, my dear boy, have you carried the day?

Miss Wal. I have been weak enough to indulge him with a victory, indeed, General.

Gen. *None but the brave, none but the brave, &c.* [*Singing.*

Tor. I congratulate you heartily on this decree, General.

Gen. This had nearly proved a day of disappointment, but the stars have fortunately turn'd it in my favour, and now I reap the rich reward of my victory. [*Salutes her.*

Capt. And here I take her from you, as the greatest good which Heaven can send me.

Miss Wal. O, Captain!

Gen. You take her as the greatest good which Heaven can send you, Sirrah; I take her as the greatest good which Heaven can send me: And now what have you to say to her?

Miss Wal. General Savage!

Tor. Here will be a fresh injunction to stop proceedings.

Miss Wal. Are you never to have done with mistakes?

Gen. What mistakes can have happen'd now, my sweetest? you delivered up your dear hand to me this moment?

Miss Wal. True, Sir; but I thought you were going to bestow my dear hand upon this dear gentleman.

Gen. How! that dear gentleman!

Capt. I am thunder-struck!

Tor. General—*None but the brave, &c.* [*Sings.*

Gen. So the covert way is clear'd at last; and you have imagined that I was all along negotiating for this fellow, when I was gravely soliciting for myself?

Miss Wal. No other idea, Sir, ever once enter'd my imagination.

Tor. General—*Noble minds should ne'er despair, &c.* [*Sings.*

Gen. Zounds! here's all the company pouring upon us in full gallop, and I shall be the laughing-stock of the whole town.

Enter

Enter BELVILLE, Mrs. BELVILLE, Lady RACHEL, LEESON, and CONNOLLY.

Bel. Well, General, we have left you a long time together. Shall I give you joy?

Gen. No; with me demolish'd in the fortifications of Dunkirk.

Mrs. Bel. What's the matter?

Lady Rach. The General appears disconcerted.

Leef. The gentleman looks as if he had fought a hard battle.

Con. Ay, and gain'd nothing but a defeat, my dear.

Tor. I'll shew cause for his behaviour.

Gen. Death and damnation! not for the world! I am taken by surprise here; let me consider a moment how to cut my way thro' the enemy.

Miss Wal. How could you be deceived in this manner! [*to the Capt.*

Lady Rach. O, Mr. Torrington, we are much obliged to you; you have been in town ever since last night, and only see us now by accident.

Tor. I have been very busy, Madam; but you look sadly, very sadly indeed! your old disorder the jaundice, I suppose, has been very troublesome to you?

Lady Rach. Sir, you have a very extraordinary mode of complimenting your acquaintance.

Con. I don't believe for all that, that there's a word of a lie in the truth he speaks. [*aside.*

Leef. Mr. Torrington, your most obedient—You received my letter, I hope.

Tor. What, my young barrister!—Have you any more traders from Dantzick to be naturalized?

Con. Let us only speak to you in private; and we'll there clear up the affair before the whole company.

Tor. [*speaking apart to Leef. and Con.*] This gentleman's letter has already clear'd it up to my entire satisfaction; and I don't know whether I am most pleas'd with his wit, or charm'd with his probity.—However, Mr. Leeson, I us'd the bailiffs sadly.—Bailiffs are generally sad fellows to be sure; but we must love justice for our own sakes.

Leef.

Leef. Unquestionably, Sir, and they shall be amply recompensed for the merit of their sufferings.

Con. And the merit of suffering, I fancy, is the only merit that is ever likely to fall to the share of a sheriff's officer.

Tor. One word—one word more, Mr. Leeson.—I have enquired your character, and like it—like it much.—Forgive the forwardness of an old man—You must not want money—you must not indeed—

Leef. Sir——

Tor. Pray, don't be offended—I mean to give my friends but little trouble about my affairs when I am gone.—I love to see the people happy that my fortune is to make so; and shall think it a treason against humanity, to leave a shilling more than the bare expences of my funeral.—Breakfast with me in the morning.

Leef. You overwhelm me with this generosity; but a happy revolution in my fortunes, which you will soon know, renders it wholly unnecessary for me to trouble you.

Con. [*wiping his eyes.*] Upon my soul, this is a most worthy old crater—to be his own executor. If I was to live any long time among such people, they'd soon be the death of me with their very goodness.

Mrs. Bel. Miss Walsingham, Captain Savage has been telling Mr. Belville and me of a very extraordinary mistake.

Miss Wal. 'Tis very strange indeed, mistake on mistake.

Bel. 'Tis no way strange to find every body properly struck with the merit of Miss Walsingham.

Miss Wal. A compliment from you now, Mr. Belville, is really worth accepting.

Gen. If I thought the affair could be kept a secret, by making the town over to my son, since I am utterly shut out myself—

Capt. He seems exceedingly embarrassed.

Gen. If I thought that;—why, mortified as I must be in giving it up, I think I could resolve upon the manœuvre, to save myself from universal ridicule: but it can't be;—it can't be; and I only double my own disappointment in rewarding the disobedience of the rascal who has supplanted me. There!—There! they are all talking of it, all laughing at me, and I shall run mad.

Mrs. Temp. [*behind.*] I say, you feather-headed puppy, he is in this house; my own servant saw him come in, and I will not stir till I find him.

Gen. She here!—then deliberation is over, and I am entirely blown up.

Lady Rach. I'll take notes of this affair.

Enter Mrs. TEMPEST.

Mrs. Temp. Mighty well, Sir. So you are in love, it seems;—and you want to be married it seems?

Leef. My blessed aunt!—O how proud I am of the relation!

Gen. Dear Bab, give me quarter before all this company.

Mrs. Temp. You are in love, you old fool, are you? and you want to marry Miss Walsingham indeed!

Con. I never heard a pleasanter spoken gentlewoman—O honey, if I had the taming of her, she shou'd never be abusive, without keeping a civil tongue in her head.

Mrs. Temp. Well, Sir, and when is the happy day to be fix'd?

Bel. What the devil, is this true, General?

Gen. True—Can you believe such an absurdity?

Mrs. Temp. Why, will you deny, you miserable old mummy, that you made propofals of marriage to her?

Gen. Yes I do—no I don't—peopofals of marriage!

Miss Wal. In favour of your son—I'll help him out a little. [*Aside.*

Gen. Yes, in favour of my son—what the devil shall I do?

Mrs. Bel. Shall I take a lesson from this lady, Mr. Belville? Perhaps, if the women of virtue were to pluck up a little spirit, they might be soon as well treated as kept mistresses.

Mrs. Temp. Harkee, General Savage, I believe you assert a falsehood; but if you speak the truth, give your son this moment to Miss Walsingham, and let me be fairly rid of my rival.

Gen. My son! Miss Walsingham!—Miss Walsingham! my son!

Bel. It will do, Horace; it will do.

Mrs. Temp. No prevarications, General Savage; do what I bid you instantly, or, by all the wrongs of an enraged woman, I'll so expose you —

Con. What a fine fellow this is to have the command of an army!

Gen. If Miss Walsingham can be prevailed upon.

Tor. O, she'll oblige you readily—but you must settle a good fortune upon your son.

Mrs. Temp. That he shall do.

Mrs. Bel. Miss Walsingham, my dear—

Miss Wal. I can refuse nothing either to your request, or to the request of the General.

Gen. Oblige me with your hand then, Madam: come here you—come here captain. There, there is Miss Walsingham's hand for you.

Con. And as pretty a little fist it is as any in the three kingdoms.

Gen. Torrington shall settle the fortune.

Leef. I give you joy most heartily, Madam.

Bel. We all give her joy.

Capt. Mine is beyond the power of expression.

Miss Wal. [*aside to the company.*] And so is the General's, I believe.

Con. O faith, that may be easily seen by the sweetness of his countenance.

Tor. Well, the cause being now at last determined, I think we may all retire from the court.

Gen. And without any great credit, I fear, to the General.

Con. By my soul, you may say that.—

Mrs. Temp. Do you murmur, Sir?—Come this moment home with me.

Gen. I'll go any where to hide this miserable head of mine: what a damn'd campaign have I made of it! [*Exeunt Gen. and Mrs. Temp.*]

Con. Upon my soul, if I was in the General's place, I'd divide the house with this devil; I'd keep within doors myself, and make her take the outside.

Lady Rach. Here's more food for a comedy.

Leef. So there is, Madam; and Mr. Torrington, to whose goodness I am infinitely obliged, could tell you some diverting anecdotes, that would enrich a comedy considerably.

Con. Ay, faith, and a tragedy too.

Tor. I can tell nothing but what will redound to the credit of your character, young man.

Bel. The day has been a busy one, thanks to the communicative disposition of the Captain.

Mrs. Bel. And the evening shou'd be cheerful.

Bel. I sha'n't therefore part with one of you, till we have had a hearty laugh at our general adventures.

Miss Wal. They have been very whimsical indeed; yet if represented on the stage, I hope they wou'd be found not only entertaining, but instructive.

Lady Rach. Instructive! why the modern critics say that the only business of comedy is to make people laugh.

Bel. That is degrading the dignity of letters exceedingly, as well as lessening the utility of the stage.—A good comedy is a capital effort of genius, and should therefore be directed to the noblest purposes.

Miss Wal. Very true; and unless we learn something while we chuckle, the carpenter who nails a pantomime together, will be entitled to more applause than the best comic poet in the kingdom.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

END OF THE FIFTH ACT.

E P I L O G U E.

SPOKEN BY MRS. ABINGTON.

CAN it be thought, ye wives! this scribbling fool,
Will draw you here, by calling you to School?
Does not he know, poor soul! to be directed
Is what you hate, and more to be corrected!
Long have these walls to public fame been known,
An ancient College to instruct the town!
We've Schools for Rakes, for Fathers, Lovers, Wives,
For naughty girls and boys, to mend their lives:
Where some to yawn, some round about to look,
Some to be seen, few come to mind their book:

Q q 2

Some

Some with high wit and humour hither run,
 To sweat the masters—and they call it fun.
 Some modish sparks, true stoicks; and high bred,
 Come, but ne'er know what's done, or sung, or said;
 Should the whole herd of critics round them roar,
 And with one voice cry out, encore! encore!
 Or louder yet, off, off; no more! no more!
 Should Pit, Box, Gall'ry with convulsions shake,
 Still are they half asleep, nor t'other half awake;
 O, ladies fair! are these fit men to wed?
 Such husbands, half, had better be quite dead.
 But, to return,—vain men, throughout the nation,
 Boast, they alone, have College education:
 Are not we qualify'd to take degrees?
 We've caps, and gowns, nay bands too, if you please,
 Cornelly's, and Almack's, our Universities!
 Young female students rise, if girls of parts,
 From under-graduates,—mistresses of arts!
 The bashful spinsters, turn important spouses,
 Strive to be masters, and the heads of houses;
 Will any of you here, blest with a wife,
 Dispute the fact,—you dare not for your life.
 Pray tell me truly, criticks, and be free,
 Do you this night prefer the Wife to me?
 Shall Mrs. Belville give the Play a name?
 What are her merits? a cold, smiling dame,
 While I, a salamander, lived in flame!
 Press'd by three lovers!—'twas indeed provoking!
 Ladies, upon my word, it was no joking.
 Can you from mortal woman more require,
 Than save her fingers, and yet play with fire?
 The risks I run, the partial bard upbraids;
 Wives won't be taught,—be it the School for Maids.

E P I L O G U E

THE ROMANCE OF AN HOUR

THE

ROMANCE OF AN HOUR:

A

C O M E D Y

O F T W O A C T S.

THE
THOMAS

OF PLAIN VELL

1944

THE ROMANCE OF AN HOUR

IS INSCRIBED TO

THOMAS HARRIS, ESQ;

AS A PUBLIC, THOUGH TRIFLING TESTIMONY,

OF THE VERY SINCERE ESTEEM

ENTERTAINED FOR HIM

BY THE AUTHOR.

Gough-Square, Dec.

16th, 1774.

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THOMAS HARRIS, ESQ.

AS A PUBLIC, THOUGH TRILLING TESTIMONY,

OF THE VERY SINCERE ESTEEM

ENTERTAINED FOR HIM

BY THE AUTHOR.

George Spence, Dec.
1877.

ADVERTISEMENT.

AS the lovers of the drama are generally very desirous of dramatic anecdote, it will possibly please the Reader to know, that the ROMANCE OF AN HOUR (be it what it may) owes its existence to Mrs. Abington. This unrivalled daughter of comedy, in a conversation with me, once expressing a wish to perform a character of *perfect simplicity*, the interesting tale called the *Test of Friendship*, immediately struck upon my recollection, and Mrs. Abington concurred with me in thinking, that a native of the East, situated like Marmontel's heroine, might be advantageously introduced on our theatre.

The world, though perfectly acquainted with the professional excellence of Mrs. Abington, is perhaps to be informed, that there is scarcely a better judge of dramatic literature, than this great actress: flattered, therefore, by her opinion, I readily took up the pen, and sketched out the following scenes, with a view of exhibiting them at her benefit. The difficulty however of producing a new piece accurately, which is solely designed for the emolument even of the first performers, occurring to us both, Mrs. Abington generously refused to hazard any little reputation which I might possess, upon her account; and I took my trifle the more readily back, from a reflection that she could only have, what she always has on her night, an overflowing theatre. One of the many accidents attending the government of the stage, has now brought it to Covent-Garden house, and though disappointed in my purpose with respect to Mrs. Abington, the great justice done me by the managers, as well as by the performers, gives me abundant cause to be satisfied with my situation——But to the Piece——

The circumstance of a young lady's falling in love with the friend of a man whom she was intended to marry, though the foundation

R r

of

of Marmontel's tale, has no novelty in it; those who are conversant with the drama, will not only find it in many of our comedies, but in many of our tragedies also. On this account, I paid little attention to Marmontel's mode of advancing the catastrophe, and am solely indebted to him for the character of Zelida. Sir Hector Strangeways, Lady Di, Orson, Pillage, and Buffora, are entirely my own; and this acknowledgment is a justice indispensably due to the celebrated French novelist, because those who are unacquainted with the story in the original, might otherwise think him answerable for many of my imperfections. Indeed, if the same indulgence should accompany *THE ROMANCE OF AN HOUR*, to the closet, which distinguished its appearance on the stage, Marmontel would not have much cause to tremble for his *Gentle East Indian*; nor should I have any thing to apprehend from the animadversion of criticism.

It has, I confess, been remarked by some of my warmest friends, that the manners neither of a Knight of the Bath, nor of an English Admiral, are preserved in Sir Hector Strangeways; I grant the objection in its fullest force, and have, in the character of Lady Di, myself made the observation; but it is for this very reason Sir Hector becomes an object of ridicule, and consequently a fair object of comedy: the manners are frequently to comedy, what the passions are to tragedy. If people were to act with propriety in private life, or with justice in public, the chief sources both of comedy and tragedy would be speedily shut up. Sir John Falstaff, Sir Francis Wronghead, and Sir John Brute, for instance, are so many disgraces to their rank; yet, in the whole rounds of the sock, where shall we find three such admirable characters? In like manner, with regard to tragedy, we must admit that kings should be just, liberal, and merciful; but if we are to condemn a poet for making them rash, rapacious, or inhuman, what will become of those three great works, which reflect such honour on the British stage, *Lear*, *Richard*, and *Macbeth*?

Upon the whole, as there is no rank without its occasional disgrace, we must, to correct folly or vice, paint men as they *sometimes are*, not as they *always ought to be*; and if in tragedy we terrify people into
virtue,

virtue, by exhibiting the consequences resulting from their crimes, we must in comedy, laugh them into correctness, by shewing the ridicule they necessarily incur when they act below the consequence of their characters.

Had I held Sir Hector up as an object of *imitation*, there might be a just objection to him; but representing him as an object of *ridicule*, he becomes, I hope, not only inoffensive but instructive; and we may as well conceive society to be degraded by the exhibition of a fool or a villain, as suppose either that the navy, or the order of the Bath, is insulted, by the character of Sir Hector Strangeways.—

HUGH KELLY.

R r 2

P R O L O G U E.

WRITTEN BY MR. KELLY.

SPOKEN BY MR. LEE.

TO-night, good folks, though led a little dance,
Through the light mazes of an Hour's Romance,
No spells, no spectres have you cause to dread,
Not one poor thunder rumbles o'er your head;
Nor will the tempest howling through the trees,
Once rouse your horror—with a storm of pease.—
Between ourselves, this poet was a fool,
To plan by common sense, or build by rule;
When even the mightiest masters of the stage,
Have gain'd so much from trick, in every age!
Shakespeare is great—is exquisite—no doubt—
But then our carpenters must help him out:
The deep distresses of a mad'ning Lear,
In vain would ask the tributary tear,
If, 'midst the fury of the midnight sky,
Our rosin lightnings did not aptly fly,
And pity warmly plead to be let in,
Through a smart shower of heart-exploring tin.—
Let critics proudly form dramatic laws,
Give me, say I, what's sure to meet applause;
Let them of time, and place, and action boast,
I'm for a devil, a dungeon, or a ghost—
When Hamlet, weeping for a murder'd fire,
Upbraids his mother with a guilty fire,
Though every line a plaudit should command,
Not one god yonder will employ his hand.
But, cased in canvass, let the dead stalk in,
Then the loud peans—then the claps begin—
And pit, box, gallery, eagerly contend,
Exalted strife! who loudest shall commend

The

*The frantic ha! The Bedlamite—"look there—
The start—the heave—the stagger—and the stare!—
To dear Macbeth, the learned ladies all run—
What to enjoy?—the flaming of the cauldron.*

*Ask Molly Dripping there, so sleek and mild,
(As good a cook as e'er drest roast or boil'd)*

What in all Juliet makes her soonest weep?

She'll say the funeral—'Tis so werry deep!

Allur'd by sterling sentiment alone,

"Cato for me, (cries Darby Macabone);

"I never miss that play at any time,

"If 'tis but added to a pantomime."—

"Hoot,"—growls a bold North-Bratton (taking snuff);

"A pantomime is axacrable stuff—

"Na bag-pipes in the bond—They donna play

"The Corn Rags, or the Barks of Andermay."—

In short, though all stage mummary despise,

All want a banquet for their ears or eyes;

And while at shows they take the most offence,

Still make them bladders to the shore of sense.

The name our author gives his piece to-night,

Wou'd well admit a supper for the sight;

A grand collection of dramatic dishes,

Of dragons, giants, forests, rivers, fishes;

Yet though he calls his trifle a romance,

He does not treat you with a single dance,

Nor use one hackney'd, one eccentric art;

To lull your judgment; or to cheat your heart—

He brings, indeed, a character to view,

From Indian climes, he trusts entirely new—

A poor Gentoo, composed of virtues all,

Though fresh from English nabobs at Bengal;

His face, perhaps, too swarthy you may find;

"Yet see Othello's visage in his mind"—

And 'till you've fairly tried our trembling Bays,

Eorbear to blame—but do not fear to praise.

Dramatis

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

Sir HECTOR STRANGEWAYS,

Mr. Shuter.

Colonel ORMSBY,

Mr. Clarke.

BROWNLOW,

Mr. Bensley.

ORSON,

Mr. Quick.

BUSSORA,

Mr. Lee Lewis.

PILLAGE,

Mr. Dunstall.

JAMES,

Mr. Bates.

W O M E N.

ZELIDA,

Mrs. Bulkley.

Lady DI STRANGEWAYS,

Mrs. Green.

JENNY,

Miss Pearse.

The SCENE, LONDON.

Time, the Time of Representation.

THE ROMANCE OF AN HOUR:

C O M E D Y.

ACT I. SCENE I.

An Apartment at Sir Hector Strangeway's.

Enter Sir Hector and Lady D.

Sir Hector. **A**N impudent puppy, to pester me with his fees of honour. I thought that at court it was not honourable to pay any thing.

Lady D. But Sir Hector Strangeways—

Sir Hec. But Lady Di Strangeways, I tell you again, that if I had all the wealth of the Spanish galleons, I would not part with a single piece of eight upon this occasion.—I did not ask them to knight me, and they may unknight me again, if they like it; for I value the broad pendant on the Dreadnought mast-head, above any title which they can splice, to all the red or green, or blue rags in Christendom.

Lady D. Well, my dear, but though an admiral's uniform is a very pretty thing, there is something inexpressibly attracting in a star; and if I could only persuade you to wear a bag-wig, that red-ribbon would give a world of brilliancy to your complexion.

Sir Hec. My complexion! Zounds, wife, don't make me mad! A weather-beaten sailor of fifty, ought to be mightily concern'd about the brilliancy of his complexion.

Lady D. Lord, Sir Hector, you are not so old by half a year—and if you would follow my advice about the bag, you'd look as young as Billy Brownlow—

Sir

Sir Hec. Avaft, Di—Avaft—I have already fuffered you to crowd too much canvafs, and to make a puppy of me fufficiently.

Lady D. I beg, Sir Hector, that you will foften the coarfenefs of your phrafeology, and ufe a little lefs of the quarter-deck dialect.

Sir Hec. Zounds, madam, 'tis your own fault if the gale blows in your teeth—I might have been out with a fquadron in the Mediterranean, hadn't I humoured your fancy, and foolifhly ftaid to be piped in at the installation—However, there's fome chance yet—the admiral appointed, is attended by three docters, and if they heave him over, I have a promife of fucceeding in the command—There's a cable of comfort for you to fnatch at, Lady Di.

Lady D. Yes, you cruel! and, for fear bad news fhould not reach me foon enough, you have ordered an exprefs to be fent up directly from Portfmouth, the moment the poor admiral is gathered to his progenitors.

Sir Hec. Yes, the moment his anchor is a peak; and I'll take your fon Orfon with me too, for I fhall have him turn'd into a monkey if he ftays much longer afhore.

Lady D. Surely you won't be fuch a brute, my love—The boy is quite a fea monfter already—and I muft keep him clofe under my own eye, to give him fome little touches of humanity.

Sir Hec. Orfon is wild, I grant, but he is well-meaning; and therefore I forbid all leffons of good-breeding, that are likely to make a heel in his principles.

Enter ORSON.

Orfon. Huzza, 'father, huzza!

Sir Hec. What do you cheer at, lad?

Orf. Here's an advice boat, that Colonel Ormsby has juft made London, and will take a birth with us before the evening gun is fir'd!

Lady D. How often muft I tell you, child, that it is exceedingly vulgar to appear either furprifed or overjoyed at any thing.

Sir Hec. Don't defire the boy to flacken his fails in a chafe of good nature.

Lady D. Why, what is the fool in raptures for? he never faw Colonel Ormsby fince the moment of his exiftence.

Orf. No mother—but I know that he is my uncle Brownlow's friend—That he has weathered my uncle from many a bitter blast, and is to be married to the sweet young lady my uncle lately brought us home from Bengal.

Sir Hec. And has any body carried the news to Zelida?

Lady D. The lady Zelida, my dear—you know that her father was an Indian Omrah, or nobleman of great authority!

Orf. I sent Buffora aloft with the news, and the poor fellow was as much rejoiced as a man of war at short allowance would be in sight of the Downs.

Sir Hec. I do love that Buffora—he's so faithful a creature, and has a heart as sound as a biscuit.

Lady D. I don't wonder that he's so great a favourite with his lady, for he's extremely intelligent, and would, I dare say, readily hazard his life in her service.

Orf. Zounds, I'd stand a broadside for her myself at any time.

Sir Hec. Damn you, firrah, do you swear? One would think that your ship was sinking, and that you expected every moment to be launch'd into the next world, you young rascal!

Lady D. Ay, this is your blessed system of sea-education.

Sir Hec. Hark'ee 'scapegrace, mind your hits, if you'd avoid a rope's end; and remember to keep your wickedness under hatches, 'till you come to years of discretion, you puppy!

Lady D. Mercy upon us! and is he then to let it appear above board—Fine doctrine, truly, that our vices are to be excused, in proportion as we acquire a consciousness of their enormity.—You should study my mode of expression, Sir Hector.

Orf. Why, I meant no harm, tho' I've rais'd such a squall. Every body loves Miss Zelida, and many a heavy heart has it given me, since she cast anchor in this house, to see her so melancholy, poor soul!

Sir Hec. She's a delightful girl, that's the truth of it—And I hope that the arrival of Ormsby will prevent the worms of her sorrow from eating into the planks of her constitution.

Lady D. Lord, my dear, do you think that a mind so delicate as her's, can be destitute of gratitude, or indifferent about a man, who not only repeatedly saved her father's life in the commotions of the East,

but what was still more, preserved the ladies of his family from violation.

Sir Hec. Come, come, Ormsby is a noble fellow.

Orf. As ever stept from stem to stern, my uncle Brownlow says.

Sir Hec. And Zelida's father behaved nobly to him, when his dead lights were hung out.

Lady D. I suppose you mean by bequeathing him this only daughter in his last moments, who is mistress of so large a fortune.

Sir Hec. Why, is not she an Acapulco vessel in herself, to say nothing of her being ballasted with rupees and pagodas?

Lady D. And cou'd her father, who loved the English extremely, who married her mother, an English woman, and who knew the Colonel's worth so well, act more prudently, in the distracted state of his country, than in giving his child to a man, who was not only able to protect her against all dangers, but calculated besides, to make her an admirable husband.

Sir Hec. Why your brother tells me that Abdalla had none of his country superstition on board his mind.

Orf. Was'n't he a heathen, father?

Sir Hec. Yes, lad; but for all that he steer'd his course very sensibly, and knew that the chart of a good conscience would bring a ship of any nation to safe moorings, in what our methodist boatswain calls the river of Jordan.

Orf. Lord, father, boatswain says, that a river runs by some town called New Jerusalem, but I never could find either of them in the map.

Lady D. You may easily judge the liberality of Abdalla's mind, by the accomplishments of Zelida.

Sir Hec. Why she speaks English, French, and Italian.

Lady D. Like her vernacular tongue.

Orf. Yes, she has a rare knack at her tongue; and I don't believe that there's ever a foreign merchantman in the whole Thames, but she's able to hail in her own lingo.

Sir Hec. Then she sings so sweetly.

Orf. Yes, father; but she sings always mournful, like the mad negro that died in love for the ale house girl at Portsmouth.

Lady

Lady D. Like the mad negro! Mercy upon me, what a thing am I a mother to!

Sir Hec. Doesn't she dance charmingly, Di?

Lady D. Divinely—I know but one woman in England who is her superior in that accomplishment.

Sir Hec. And she is no more to be compared to that woman in any thing, than one of the royal yachts to a bum-boat upon the Thames.

Lady D. I am always certain of a compliment from you, Sir Hector;

Orf. Lord, Mother, sure it wasn't yourself that you were weighing up with Miss Zelida.

Lady D. You odious sea-calf—quit the room. Quit the room, you detestable porpoise!

Sir Hec. Who runs foul of politeness now, Di?

Orf. We had best cut and run, father.

Lady D. And you, Sir Hector, to stand by and see me treated in this manner.

Sir Hec. Slip the cables, lad: this is damnable weather, and will speedily blow a hurricane. [Exit Sir Hec. and Orson.]

Lady D. The brutes—the abominable brutes! No woman, surely, had ever such a husband, or such a son. But I deserve it all, for having the least connection with an element, where the utmost the very best can arrive at, is to be so many respectable Hottentots! My sufferings should teach ladies of beauty and birth not to throw their persons away—Yet I should not have been thrown away myself, if any lover had offered, of a more eligible character than this barbarian here. [Exit.]

The SCENE changes to a Library.

BROWNLOW and BUSSORA discovered.

Brown. Your lady burst into tears, Bussora, on hearing of Colonel Ormsby's arrival?

Buss. Yes, and not the tears of joy neither, Mr. Brownlow.

Brown. I am sorry for it.

Buss. Ah! me wish she have never leave Bengal—For though she have no yet learn to teach the lie to her feelings, still me fear that she has learn some other of the no good fashions of this country.

Brown. What do you mean?

Buff. Me mean that she is going to marry Colonel Ormsby, without having, in my tink, any regard for him.

Brown. You were born in her father's service, Buffora, are the only attendant she has of her own country, and she confides, I know, with great reason, in your attachment to her.

Buff. Me can die with pleasure for her good—me must die with grief if her do wrong ting.

Brown. And would it be a wrong thing to fulfil her father's last commands, by marrying Colonel Ormsby?

Buff. Ah! Mr. Brownlow, wrong ting one place, right ting another. Wrong ting in India lady no to love husband; very right ting for English lady to hate husband heartily.

Brown. Why, indeed, Buffora, we never have any ladies here, desirous of burning themselves at the funeral of a husband. But has your lady given you any reasonable cause to suspect an aversion to the marriage with Colonel Ormsby?

Buff. O, if she love Colonel, why weep at him come to England?

Brown. [*aside.*] 'Tis as I fear'd.

Buff. Now for Heaven love, Mr. Brownlow, as she regard you much, advise her. You was all care, all goodness to her in passage from Bengal, and soon dried her tears for father and for country.

Brown. I think you said, she means to see me here in a few minutes.

Buff. Yes, yes, and pray tell, since her must marry Colonel, that though no love husband is very well among Christians, him is very wicked among Gentoos.

Brown. But you forget all this time that I am a Christian, Buffora.

Buff. Ah, no, you be too good; me saw you save black man's life, and no plunder in India. Besides, you have behaved like brother to my lady, place her with your own sister, and said oftener than a thousand times, that there was no sin in having copper complexion. [*Exit.*]

Brown. Into what a distressing situation am I plunged! Ormsby come, and Zelida, as I dreaded, upon my account, averse to ratify her engagements. Little did I conceive that my desire to discharge my trust like a true friend to poor Ormsby, would prove the source of his mortification, or that my endeavours, during the course of our passage
from

from Bengal, to soften the anxiety of Zelida's mind at the death of her father, would be attended with such unlucky consequences. Let my sentiments, however, in favour of this lovely infidel, be what they may, the obligations I owe my friend, as well as the trust he has reposed in my honour, would render it not only cruel, but infamous in me, to indulge a hope repugnant to his wishes. Since, therefore, she can never be mine, I shall shew my regard for her in the best manner, by prevailing upon her to accept the only man on earth, who is most entitled to her affection, and who, if I had not unfortunately intervened, would certainly have possessed it.

Enter ZELIDA.

Zel. So Mr. Brownlow.

Brown. Something has offended you, my dearest Zelida.

Zel. I am not satisfied with myself, Mr. Brownlow.

Brown. Then I am afraid that you are not just to yourself; for when have you once committed an impropriety? You have heard that Colonel Ormsby is arrived?

Zel. It was upon this very business that I wanted to consult you, Brownlow.

Brown. As your engagements with Colonel Ormsby are no secret, there can be no impropriety in speaking upon the subject to his friend.

Zel. Engagements!—I am under no engagements.

Brown. No, Madam!

Zel. [*with emphasis.*] No, Sir! My father could not engage me to do an impossibility. I esteem, I reverence Colonel Ormsby: but my very gratitude for the services which he has rendered my family, obliges me to deny him a hand which is not accompanied by a heart.

Brown. My dearest creature, the Colonel's merit and your principles will be sufficient foundation for happiness after marriage, though at the performance of the ceremony there should not be as much passion as might be wished on your side.

Zel. The Colonel, as a man of merit, should not be deceived with an alienated heart—as a man of honour, he would despise it.

Brown. And have you no pity for the Colonel?

Zel.

Zel. You have no pity for me, and indeed very little for your friend, when you want to give him a wife, who cannot be his without a falsehood.

Brown. Poor Ormsby, what must he feel?

Zel. He will feel like a man of honour; otherwise what he feels, is below consideration.—In one word, therefore, I never will be his.

Brown. Consider your father's last commands.

Zel. I consider the spirit of his intention, not the mere form of his words; he wanted to make me happy, and I will not disappoint him if I can help it.

Brown. Excuse me for pressing this matter so strongly.

Zel. I do excuse you. I know that you have obligations to Ormsby, as well as myself; but it is a false gratitude, a false generosity, which requires us to forego our happiness, and if we must repay a favour with our honour, or our peace of mind, it may often be the kindest thing imaginable, to leave us sinking under our misfortunes.

Brown. O, Zelida!

Zel. You tremble, Brownlow, a tear is standing in your eye, what's the matter with you?

Brown. Nothing. [sighs.]

Zel. And that sigh springs from nothing too, does it? Why do you torture me, Brownlow?

Brown. Torture you? I wish you to be happy! I implore you to marry Ormsby.

Zel. And do you, Brownlow, *really*, do you *sincerely*, do you *indeed* wish that I should marry the Colonel?

Brown. Why do you ask such a question?

Zel. Why should you hesitate to answer it?

Brown. It is already answer'd in the advice I have given you.

Zel. Is it?

Brown. O, Zelida! You are as dear to me as——

Zel. As what, Brownlow?

Brown. What would I say? As if you were actually my sister.

Zel. However, if I *must* be your sister, where is the necessity of my being married at all? I can live with you and Lady Di.

Brown.

Brown. I must relinquish you to the guardianship of Ormsby.—My sister, besides, though a worthy woman, is a whimsical one, and my family is importunate with me——

Zel. To marry too—and perhaps your heart is already engaged.

Brown. Spare me on this subject, dear Zelida!

Zel. Why, you may tell me, you know, since I am your sister.

Brown. If I must speak, it is too deeply——

Zel. Ah! [*aside.*] And is the lady very handsome, Brownlow?

Brown. How she wrings my heart! An angel!

Zel. But why do you sigh? You don't despair of obtaining her?

Brown. I am totally hopeless! She must be married to another!

Zel. Oh! Brownlow, how I pity you! 'Tis a dreadful thing to lose the object of one's heart!

Brown. I find it so, indeed, Zelida—but there is a fatality in love. Few, I fear, are happy enough to marry, where they really bestow their affections. Your case, my dearest girl, is far from singular; let me, therefore, again conjure you, for all our sakes, to give Ormsby the reception he expects at your hands: I will not trespass any longer on your patience. To see you thus agitated, overwhelms me with affliction! Summon up your fortitude, my sweet sister, and be assured that if my life could purchase your tranquillity, I should cheerfully resign it.

[*Exit.*]

[*Zelida sits and muses some time, then rings a bell.*]

Enter a Servant.

Ser. Did you ring, Madam?

Zel. Yes, James, send Bussora to me.

Ser. I will, Madam.

[*Exit.*]

Zel. [*walking about some time in disorder*] Where can this Bussora be?

Enter BUSSORA.

You have been a long time coming.

Buff. O dear lady, when mind is no easy—the lightning himself walk on crutches,

Zel.

Zel. I have news that will rejoice you, Buffora; [*sighs.*] I mean to leave England immediately.

Buff. And go again to land of our fathers, lady?

Zel. I do.

Buff. How come him blessing about Lady?

Zel. Not liking Colonel Ormsby—I am resolved never to marry him.

Buff. Heaven be tank, Lady.

Zel. We must, however, get away by stealth, Buffora, for this is a nation of contradictions; and as the people are mighty lovers of liberty, we may not be suffered to follow our own inclinations.

Buff. Me thot that in this house you have all friends, Lady.

Zel. Ah, Buffora, there is no living in this unaccountable place.—A father here, will break his daughter's heart to make her happy; and a woman may be a very excellent wife who has no regard whatever for her husband!

Buff. O dear!—Law too, Lady, him very vile here, of which 'em boast so much—Poor starving devil he hang up, if he steal rupee for dinner—But him good enough to be a lord, if he rob a hundred thousand pounds.

Zel. Well, Buffora, we'll stay no longer in a place where the kindness of the best friends, is as dangerous as the malice of the worst enemies—Yet, as I quit this house clandestinely, it will be proper to leave such little presents as I have accepted behind me, together with a letter accounting for my conduct, and making proper acknowledgments for the civilities I have received.

Buff. To be sure, Lady; ungrateful him only belong to Christian.

Zel. Here's a watch set with diamonds, given me by Colonel Ormsby.—This brilliant (*beigh ho*) I had from Mr. Brownlow—and this is Lady Di's picture.

Buff. Yes, Lady; me wonder how painter can make like of the lady's in England—um have so many complexion.—In morning um is yellow—in noon um is red—in evening um is red and white—and when em go to bed, um faces have fifty colours, just so as back of alligator upon Ganges.

Zel.

Zel. I think I have recollected every thing.

Buff. No, Lady: here is little paint of Mr. Brownlow for lady his sister—You bid me borrow him this morning from limner, and me forgot him in other business.

Zel. This!—O—this I'll take with me.

Buff. Ah! Lady—White man, him could do no more worse, as take what no his.

Zel. Why, to be sure it is not mine, Buffora, nor is it of any intrinsic value.

Buff. So much less reason for take him, Lady—Then he flatter Mr. Brownlow so much, that he no like at all.

Zel. Nay, now I don't think it flatters him in the least.

Buff. Here is mout so pretty.

Zel. Why, does not Mr. Brownlow smile in this delightful manner?

Buff. Mr. Brownlow very good man—and grin very handsome—but—

Zel. Then observe these eyes.

Buff. Mr. Brownlow very good man—and stare very well—but—

Zel. Here take the picture—I see you know nothing of the matter—and yet, Buffora, I have a strange fancy for the picture too—It will remind me of many interesting occurrences, and I would gladly give ten times its real value to take it along with me.

Buff. O then, Lady, leave him ten times his worth, and take him away—for greatest man in country here, he never quarrel with good bargain.

Zel. I'll follow your advice, my good Buffora—so get a coach ready in the next street, while I prepare a letter for Lady Di—I'm quite delighted that you have taught me a way of taking this trifle so properly.

Buff. O, Lady, 'tis by do what him should not, in little ting, that Europe man learn trick of committing biggest wickedness.—But we shall soon again see land of forefathers—and tank the kind Heaven, that have no let our minds be worsend by live in England. [*Exit exultingly.*]

Zel. Heigh ho!—Now Buffora is gone, my spirits sink, and I tremble at the thought of executing my own resolution—This house is very dear to me, though I am preparing to bid it an eternal farewell—How

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tenderly

tenderly did Brownlow look at me!—And must I never see him again? —But why should I desire to see him; his heart is another's, and mine shall break before it entertains a wish which is either mean, or criminal. *[Exit.]*

SCENE *changes to another Room.*

Enter ORSON and PILLAGE.

Orf. Well, Master Pillage, I am heartily glad to lie along side of you once more.——And how have you left all our old ship mates at Portsmouth?

Pil. Pure and well as to health, Master Orson, but cursedly down in the mouth that there is no war.—Trade is damn'd dead in Portsmouth; half the public houses shut up—little or no playing at cards.

Orf. And I suppose not a quarter of the girls at the back of the Point, that there used to be?

Pil. Nothing like it, Master Orson—We did hope that the death of the French King would have kick'd up a dust. But damn it, there's no spunk left in the nation now.

Orf. No more there is, purser—for even when they pipe all hands at the parliament house, they do nothing but refit the coin, or give a larger tier of cable to the papishes—Our ships are now rotting in peace, and we may as well have no navy at all, as not be at war with somebody you know!

Pil. And I warrant now you have not half the pleasure here that you have when you are down with the Dreadnought?

Orf. Pleasure! Lord help your head—I lead ten times a worse life than a cabin boy.

Pil. I fear'd as much.

Orf. Mother is wanting me for ever to read fine books, and father, if I'm not at home before it is dark, is for ever threatening me with the bilboes—Then I'm obliged to go to church twice every Sunday.

Pil. You don't say so?

Orf. Ay, but I do—father thinks me too young to be wicked—If I swear an oath, or get drunk now and then, he storms as if a candle was left in the powder-room.

Pil.

Pil. Why that's damn'd hard.

Orf. [*half crying*] Isn't it?—If there was a war, I could sit up all night sometimes at cards; and grapple now and then with a girl—Father loves a girl himself, though he is married.

Pil. Why I thought you had girls in plenty here.

Orf. Yes, there's enough of 'em cruising in every corner, at night—and for that matter, in the day-time too—But they can't produce bills of health—And there's no making 'em perform quarantine, you know.

Pil. Well, I am come up post to London, to ask your father a favour, and I'll beg of him to let you sup with me this evening.

Orf. Egad, and if you do, I'll take you on a little trip to Bagnigge Wells, where you'll see some tight sloops very prettily rigg'd, though they mostly sail under Jew commanders.

Pil. And if the Admiral—I beg his pardon, Sir Hector, stands my friend—You shan't want money, to keep a little pleasure boat of your own, Master Orson.

Orf. Zounds, you are the best friend I ever sailed with in all my life, and if I can help to tow you to your wishes, you need only make a signal.

Pil. Thank you kindly, Master Orson—But where's your father?

Orf. Asleep in his great chair.

Pil. What, he got a little rocky or so, after dinner?

Orf. Yes, he shipped a good deal of grog—but he left strict orders with me to wake him if any body came from Portsmouth.

Pil. Zounds that's lucky, for my business requires haste—You must know the purser of the *Rising Sun* died last night.

Orf. I wish you had his birth—She's a first rate.

Pil. And my present ship is only a seventy-four—I want a letter, therefore, from your father, to a certain great man—Sir Hector's interest is very good—and he promised to serve me at any time—Besides, I am a freeholder in five different counties.

Orf. Ah! that won't do you much good now, as the elections are all over: though father says, that above fifty thousand pair of jaws have been wagging away these last three months, for the good of the king-

dom. But come along with me to the shrouds, and I'll wake him directly.

Pil. He's above stairs then?

Orf. Yes, mother and he had a tight engagement a while ago; and so to shew that he wa'n't afraid to keep the sea, he ordered his pipe and his grog to be haul'd aloft into her dressing-room.

Pil. Up with you then, I follow.

Orf. Well, a good voyage to you, and then hey for the little pleasure-boat, Master Pillage. [Exeunt.]

SCENE changes, and discovers Sir HECTOR asleep in a dressing-room.

A punch-bowl, with pipes and tobacco on a toilet-table.

Enter ORSON.

Orf. Hip, father, holloa!

Sir Hec. Hey, what noise is all that? Can't you change the watch quietly and be damn'd to you? The timbers of my head are splitting.

Orf. Master Pillage, the purser, is come at the rate of nine knots an hour from Portsmouth, father, and so I waked you according to orders.

Sir Hec. And how is the admiral? Has he struck the flag of life?

Orf. I didn't ask, father.

Sir Hec. You blockhead—You are a fine one to keep a look-out at the top-mast—where is Pillage?

Orf. Close a-stern in the next room.

Sir Hec. Bid him come a-board here instantly.

Orf. I will, father—Father lays a little gunnel to yet, but he'll be right upon his keel quickly—Zounds, if a match was set to him, now he's so hot, he'd go off like a sky-rocket! [Exit.]

Sir Hec. My friend, the resident commissioner, has certainly dispatch'd Pillage to me, express, with an account of the admiral's striking.—Well, there's a brave officer laid up for ever in dock—But death will yellow us all in turn, and so I shall only think of succeeding to the command.

4 Enter

Enter PILLAGE.

Pil. Sir Hector, your most obedient!

Sir Hec. Ha! honest Pillage—my old Heart of Oak, as I used to call you.

Pil. Ah! Sir Hector, you were always my good friend.

Sir Hec. And I always will be your friend, Pillage.

Pil. I know you never forget your word, Sir Hector.

Sir Hec. Never fail'd in the teeth of a promise, since I was first rated able on the books of creation—damn me—And so he is dead, Pillage?

Pil. Yes, Sir Hector, he's gone.

Sir Hec. And a worthy fellow he was!

Pil. As ever sold a puncheon of rum, Sir Hector.

Sir Hec. Sold a puncheon of rum!—But what time did you leave Portsmouth, my good Pillage?

Pil. Within an hour after he died.

Sir Hec. And all the sails in the harbour were lowered.

Pil. Not one, Sir Hector.

Sir Hec. Wasn't that behaving with too little respect to the service, my dear friend?

Pil. He was not of rank enough, Sir Hector, though an excellent officer, and scarcely to be equall'd in his station by any in the navy.

Sir Hec. You are mistaken, Pillage, 'tis a compliment always paid to an officer of his rank—However, if my interest carries the weight of metal, I expect the navy will not suffer very much by the accident.

Pil. O you are too good, Sir Hector.

Sir Hec. Too good, man—for what? why 'tis the top-gallant object of my heart.

Pil. O Sir Hector—But as there may be other people pushing, when shall I hope that you'll mention the matter at the admiralty?

Sir Hec. I'll stretch for Charing Cross this very hour—the pinnacle out there—Poh! I mean the chariot, you rascals.

Pil. A thousand thanks to you, Sir Hector.

Sir Hec. And a thousand thanks to you for flying the streamers of your satisfaction;—here's a little mark of friendship, I must beg you to wear as a keep-sake.

[giving him a ring.]

Pil.

Pil. Dear Sir Hector, you quite distress me—Then you think there's no danger of refusal?

Sir Hec. Refuse me, Pillage!

Pil. Why, Sir Hector, I don't believe they'd venture to do that.—Your consequence is too well known.

Sir Hec. Let me see which of them would open a port-hole of denial upon Hector Strangeways.

Pil. If they should boggle, however, Sir Hector, you know I have some pretensions.

Sir Hec. I don't understand you.

Pil. I have been thirty years in the navy, you know.

Sir Hec. And what then, my dear friend?

Pil. Was wounded at Martinico.

Sir Hec. I know your merit, my good Pillage—But what then?

Pil. Though I was not obliged to be on deck.

Sir Hec. Zounds! and what then?

Pil. Nay, Sir Hector, I don't suppose that more regard will be paid to service than usual.

Sir Hec. Why, which way does the wind blow?

Pil. Yet, if I should have the good fortune to be appointed.

Sir Hec. You appointed, man! Why you have lost the rudder of your understanding.

Pil. Why not, Sir Hector? For though a seventy-four is the largest ship I have served in—

Sir Hec. We are sailing here without compass.

Pil. Dear Sir Hector, didn't you say you'd be so good as to speak for me at the admiralty.

Sir Hec. Zounds, for you! I cou'dn't be such a madman.

Pil. O, Sir Hector!

Sir Hec. Speak for you to succeed vice-admiral Grampus?

Pil. Vice-admiral Grampus! Why, Sir Hector, I'm not quite fit for Bedlam yet—I thought Master Orson had told you—

Sir Hec. What?

Pil. That I came to beg your interest to succeed honest Ralph Rapine.

Sir Hec. Who?

Pil.

Pil. The purser of the Rising Sun.

Sir Hec. Damn Orson—and damn you—and damn the purser of the Rising Sun.

Pil. Sir Hector!

Sir Hec. Why, harkee, Sirrah—Weren't you dispatched by the commissioner, to acquaint me with the death of Vice-admiral Grampus?

Pil. Not I, indeed, Sir Hector.

Sir Hec. Not you indeed!—

Pil. For I left the admiral out of danger.

Sir Hec. You did?

Pil. Yes, Sir Hector, and never spoke to the commissioner in my life.

Sir Hec. Why then you are a most impudent rascal, for suffering me to be disturb'd on your account, when I had turn'd in with a fire between decks, and a damnable smash in my roundtop.

Pil. Sir Hector—

Sir Hec. Get out of my house this moment, you puppy.

Pil. Sir Hector!

Sir Hec. You deserve a keel-hauling, you dog—or, damn me, if I was a despotic prince, I'd instantly hang you up at the yard-arm.

[Exit Pillage driven off by Sir Hector.]

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT

*The SCENE an Apartment.**Enter Lady Di and Orson.**Lady Di.* PART of Colonel Ormsby's baggage come already?*Orf.* Yes, mother, and he'll be here himself in a few minutes.*Lady Di.* Well, and where's your father, child?*Orf.* Lighting a fresh pipe, I believe, mother, over a little gin-grog, in the cabin above.*Lady D.* Go, child, and tell him I wish to speak to him this instant: this instant; do you hear, booby!—Mercy upon me, I am quite weary of this world.*Orf.* I wish you were landed upon a better, with all my heart then.*Lady D.* Why, you wicked, unnatural reprobate.*Orf.* Lord, mother, is it wicked to wish you riding safe in the other world, if you are afraid of foundering in this? *[Exit.**Lady D.* Lighting a fresh pipe over a little gin-grog in the cabin above! A pretty employment for a knight of the Bath, and my husband. He'll breathe in flame, and speak in sulphur; yet I must throw myself into his atmosphere, if he was as dangerous as an eruption from Vesuvius, for unless the bear is stroaked into some conditions about behaviour, we shall appear downright savages to Colonel Ormsby.*Enter Sir HECTOR.**Sir Hec.* Well, Di—I have bad news for you. The doctors have new sheath'd Admiral Grampus—and I am to continue land-locked upon your hands, perhaps, till the nation is indulged with another war.*Lady D.* How can you, Sir Hector, do so much injustice to my feelings, as to think I shall consider that bad news?*Sir Hec.* Why, how's this, Di?—The sky's clear'd up, and your temper is as smooth as the Pacific in a trade wind!*Lady D.* I have been thinking, my dear, how very ridiculous it is for us ever to have the smallest disagreement.*Sir*

Sir Hec. So it is, Di—The quarrel of a man and wife is like a fight between two privateers, where there is nothing but hard knocks to be got on either side.

Enter ORSON and ORMSBY.

Orf. Here he is, father, here's Colonel Ormsby.

Lady D. What a bawling the blockhead keeps. Dear Colonel——

Ormsf. I rejoice to see your ladyship.

Sir Hec. What, my old boy! Here we are all, Hector, Aftyanax, and Andromache!

Ormsf. You are too good to me in this kind reception, and I am already too much obliged in the protection which you have extended to my poor East Indian.

Orf. Lord, father, neither she nor Bussora is come back yet.

Sir Hec. Come back! I didn't know they were out of the house.

Ormsf. It was not altogether so kind of Zelida, to be absent on this occasion, as your brother inform'd me he had acquainted her with my arrival.

Sir Hec. That fellow there, might have kept an eye upon the harbour.

Orf. Lord, father, as she was not an enemy, what right had I to watch her sailing in or out of port?

Lady D. She was our guest, not our prisoner, my dear Sir Hector.

Sir Hec. And therefore you should have watch'd all her signals, my love.

Ormsf. Nay, Sir Hector, if Zelida would go out privately, how could Lady Di prevent it?

Lady D. I hope, my love, that I am not altogether destitute of breeding.

Sir Hec. My dear, you are the best bred woman alive, but, Zounds! what signifies your breeding, if this accident should make us spring a leak.

Lady D. My dear, don't lose your temper—'tis so underbred, you know.

Ormsf. I am quite unhappy that so trifling a circumstance should occasion the smallest difference between your ladyship and Sir Hector.

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Lady

Lady D. You are very good, Colonel, and will make allowance for the manners of the forecastle.

Orf. Now father——

Sir Hec. If he makes allowance for your manners, he'll be very good, indeed, Di.

Lady D. This is too much! Excuse me, Colonel Ormsby—Stand out of the way, you impudent puppy, [*to Orson*] you seem quite delighted with your father's brutality! [*Exit.*

Ormsf. Sir Hector, let me request that you will follow Lady Di, and make up this little difference.

Sir Hec. What, chace for the purpose of striking to the enemy?

Ormsf. For my sake do it, or I shall consider myself a disturber of the family union.

Sir Hec. Well, for your sake, Colonel.—Though, damme, this begging a defeat, is very strange service for an English admiral.

[*Exit Sir Hec.*

Orf. Lord, Colonel, don't be concerned at this little brush between father and mother; they engage in the same manner twenty times a-day.

Ormsf. I am sorry for it, young gentleman.

Orf. Why yesterday it rain'd very hard, and father going out for a little pleasure in an open boat—you must know—O here's my uncle—I'll sheer off: for two old messmates parted so long, may want some private jaw together. [*Exit.*

Enter BROWNLOW.

Brown. My dear Ormsby! I ask your pardon for not being immediately in the way to receive you; but after we parted at the India House, I was unexpectedly detained on a very particular business.

Ormsf. Once more, Brownlow, let me express my happiness at seeing you, and my hopes that we are both now securely fixed for life in our country. We have each of us acquired a splendid fortune in the East, without incurring a stain upon our humanity.

Enter

Enter JENNY, with a letter.

Jenny [to Brown.] Sir, my lady ordered me to deliver you this letter, which she found directed to herself, in the young East India lady's dressing-room.

Brown. Give it to me, Jenny.

[Exit Jenny.]

Ormsf. My dear Brownlow, excuse my impertinence, but may I ask if any thing in that letter relates to Zelida?

Brown. There it is——'tis from herself—she has absolutely eloped, and even says that my advice has determined her to pursue so extraordinary a measure.

Ormsf. [reads] "To Lady Di Strangeways.

"Madam,

"Though it is with infinite pain I tear myself from a family which
"has treated me with such peculiar civility, neither my happiness nor
"my honour will allow me to receive the protection of your hospitable
"roof any longer. 'Tis impossible for me to act as your brother wishes,
"and his advice, joined to some other reasons, determine me to leave
"England as speedily as possible. In return for a miniature I have
"robb'd you of, I beg you will condescendingly accept the diamond
"which lies on the toilet, and believe me, with the most perfect grati-
"tude for all your goodness, your ever devoted

"ZELIDA."

"Postscript.

"The agitation of mind, under which I write, is so great, that I
"have forgot to beg you will present my best wishes, my best acknow-
"ledgments, to Colonel Ormsby; your brother too has my warmest re-
"gards, though he wants to make me miserable, and drives me from a
"country in which I hoped to end my days."

—Brownlow!—

Brown. Ormsby!

Ormsf. For Heaven's sake, explain this mystery!

Brown. You know as much of it, my dear friend, as I do.

Ormsf. Why, she says positively here, that you wanted to make her miserable, and have driven her from the kingdom.

Brown. Simply, Ormsby, you must either think that I am a man of honour, or that I am not.

Ormsf. I have ever found you a man of the nicest honour, and as such, I have prized your friendship among the peculiar blessings of my life. But, Brownlow, Zelida has exquisite beauty, and you have a susceptible heart.—What did you want her to do, which would have made her miserable?

Brown. Nothing injurious to the friendship I profess'd for you, Ormsby.

Ormsf. Come, come, Brownlow, in the fulness of a generous friendship, I trusted you with the woman of my heart, and I must have a satisfactory account of her.

Brown. That menace, Ormsby, is very little calculated to answer your purpose, yet as I sincerely sympathize in your distress, and have no view but to rescue you from farther anxiety, I again conjure you, not to insist upon an explanation.

Ormsf. Don't insult me, Mr. Brownlow, with your pity, while you are deliberately binding me upon the rack; but if you ever valued my peace, or regarded your own honour, be explicit and tell me.

Brown. You shall be obey'd, Ormsby—however reluctantly—what has driven Zelida from this house, was my advising her to marry you.

Ormsf. Advising her to marry me!—Why should you advise her to marry me?—Where was the necessity of such an advice?—She came from India for the purpose, and your intercession in my favour, was a friendly supererogation.

Brown. This sneer, Mr. Ormsby, you will one day be sorry for, because you will one day know that it was not merited. However, instead of losing our time in this fruitless altercation, let us exert ourselves to recover the fair fugitive, and you will then know from her own lips, whether my conduct is entitled to your resentment or your approbation.

Ormsf. O, doubtless, to my deepest gratitude—but, Sir, what right had you to tamper with her affections?—What right had you to think yourself of more importance to her than I was? You fancied, perhaps, that she was smitten with that irresistible form, and therefore coolly took snuff with a request that she would not quite kill the miserable Ormsby.

Brown.

Brown. Colonel, don't let us make this affair a war of words—you have more than once saved my life, but you now attempt a murder on my honour. Let me ring for a servant to attend you to your apartment.

Ormsf. Will you be at leisure at eight?

Brown. I shall certainly.

Ormsf. I'll beg to speak with you.

Brown. You will particularly oblige me.

Ormsf. Your servant, Mr. Brownlow.

Brown. Your's, Colonel Ormsby.

[*Exeunt.*]

The SCENE changes to an Apartment.

Enter PILLAGE.

Pil. How lucky it was that so delicious a girl should come, at this time, to lodge in my sister's house.—She desires to be very private—and I dare say she has good reason for her desire.—Yet demure as she seems to be, it shall go hard if I do not get the purser'ship of the *Rising Sun* by her means. That hot-headed old fool, Sir Hector, will do any thing to obtain a pretty wench; and notwithstanding he was lately in such a passion with me, has, for answer to my note about the new-comer here, promised to call upon me immediately. I can't say, indeed, that this way of gaining preferment is the most honourable; yet my betters are every day practising ways as bad, and not one of them is, in his own opinion, disqualified for the first employment in the kingdom.

[*Sir Hector, behind*] In this cabin, child, is he?

Pil. Here he comes——

Enter Sir HECTOR.

Sir Hec. Honest Pillage, I have a thousand pardons to ask for my late behaviour—but you are a true sailor, and forget a friend's faults, where you can do him a favour.

Pil. O Sir Hector, it was a mistake on both sides.

Sir Hec. So it was—but I'll make amends—And now tell me, is the frigate you have brought me to look at, well built? Is she likely to come
to

to in a little time, or do you think she'll stand out to sea in expectation of a settlement?

Pil. Look at her first, Sir Hector, and see how you like her.

Sir Hec. I should have made more way to you, but we are all in a damn'd bustle about a wench at my own house—A wench that I should have thought of myself, if she had not claim'd the protection of my own fort, and been brought in by my brother Brownlow.

Pil. In that case the laws of honour, Sir Hector—

Sir Hec. O intitled her to quarter, damme—Straight as a main-mast—none of your clumsy Dutch sterns—her lanthorns bright as the sun—and then something divine about her bowsprit, [*feeling his nose.*] But where's your girl all this time?

Pil. In the dining-room—My sister's unluckily gone out—But if you'll walk into the next parlour a moment, Sir Hector, you'll find a new chart of Otaheite, which will amuse you, while I step up stairs myself, to see how the land lies. [*Exit.*]

Sir Hec. Otaheite!—O that's Queen Oberea's country, Heaven bless her, who sent the sailors in distress, the supply of women and hogs—Zounds! if ever I should be stationed there, I'll have a tender loaded with large nails, to prevent the honest Johns from endangering his majesty's fleet a second time, in their presents to the ladies. [*Exit.*]

SCENE changes to a Stair Case, a Dining-Room in view, with a Landing-Place.

Enter PILLAGE.

Pil. Here's the door—The lady has been kept by one of the India captains, I suppose, and designs to enter herself in the cargo of damaged virginity, which, for the honour of English delicacy now a-days, makes so considerable an article in our exports to Bengal. [*Knocks at the door.*]

Enter BUSSORA from the Door.

Busf. What you want, gentlemen?

Pil. I am brother to the mistress of the house.

Busf. And why you no stay below with your sister?

Pil.

Pil. Come don't be furly, my honest friend, here's half a crown for you.

Buf. Scorn your money, gentleman ;—Bussora no do bad ting.

Pil. Why should you suppose I want you to do a bad thing.

Buf. Because white man him never part with money but for some to do—and good ting want no pay for.

Pil. That's not foolishly thought for an Indian.

Buf. O Indian him no quite fool—though he no tink Englishman right, when he choose to take him life, or him fortune.

Pil. My sister was telling me that your mistress wanted to know the proper method of taking a passage to India.

Buf. Very true.

Pil. Now there's a friend of mine below, who knows every thing about it, and will be happy to tell her, if she will only give him leave to wait upon her.

Buf. Many tank in my lady name—me go ask if you only stay one minute, gentleman. *[Exit.*

Pil. If the gentlewoman here condescends to receive a visit, I'll send Sir Hector up by himself that he may have no interruption.

Enter BUSSORA from the Door.

Buf. Lady will be very glad to see you friend gentleman.

Pil. I thought as much !

Buf. O you may depend—Indian man him always speak truth.

Pil. Indeed !

Buf. O indeed.

Pil. Well, I'll send my friend—Who would have thought this tawny rascal so well qualified to be either a pimp or a puritan. *[aside.] [Exit.*

Buf. He surprise at me for speak truth—me fure truth is all de treasure left to poor Gentoo—and no left poor Gentoo that, if truth he was worth any thing in England. *[Exit through the Door.]*

SCENE.

SCENE *changes to an Apartment.*

Enter ZELIDA.

Zel. This stranger's coming so opportunely is very fortunate, as Buffora with all his fidelity might be unable to obtain the necessary information about our passage, without hazarding a discovery—Colonel Ormsby possibly has emissaries in search of me—or possibly Brownlow—No, Brownlow's heart is occupied by other objects, and I must never expect to engage a moment of his recollection!

Enter Sir HECTOR.

Sir Hec. There she is—a fine figure—and clear decks too.—Madam, I am your most——

Zel. [*turns about.*] Sir Hector Strangeways!

Sir Hec. [*aside*] Zounds, is it she I have borne down upon?

Zel. For Heaven's fake, Sir Hector, how did you know of my being here?

Sir Hec. 'Sdeath! I must tack about!

Zel. Speak, Sir.

Enter BUSSORA.

O Buffora we are discover'd.

Buf. Well, Lady, we have do no harm.

Zel. True—but in a country where consistency is absurd, to be innocent may be criminal.

Sir Hec. Don't be alarm'd, Madam.

Buf. No Lady—don't fear—we am come to protect you, or no live [*drawing his dagger—*] White man, Gentoo he die more soon as spill blood—But Buffora he die two times more soon, as see danger offer him Lady——Go from room——

Sir Hec. Why you damn'd idiot!—I'd die myself sooner than do your lady the smallest hurt.

Zel. Put up your dagger, Buffora, or I shall sink with terror.

Buf. There he stay 'till him wanted lady.

Sir

Sir Hec. Dear Madam, why should you suppose me an enemy? you have hoisted sail from my house, and I am sorry you did not like your moorings better, but I don't come to press you back; tho' quitting your former anchorage, let me tell you, may perhaps endanger the lives of Ormsby and Brownlow.

Zel. Endanger the life of Brownlow!

Bus. And Colonel Ormsby, him life too lady—Sir Hector he say.

Zel. But why shou'd they fight about me?

Sir Hec. I am afraid, Madam, that nothing but your marrying the Colonel, can prevent them from shattering one another's rigging a little.

Zel. Surely, Sir, the Colonel will hear reason.

Bus. O Lady—English gentleman when him in passion, scandalous for he to hear reason.

Zel. Heavens!—and can Ormsby, after the strictest intimacy of years with Brownlow, after receiving a thousand proofs of his honour, believe him in a moment capable of being a villain.

Sir Hec. He must take care of his honour.

Bus. And honour in here country, lady, oblige gentleman to kill friend without cause—Poor man, he only give a friend a black eye, or break him bones—It too grand for any but gentleman to make murder.

Zel. What shall I do?

Sir Hec. Sling in the same hammock with the Colonel, if you wish to prevent mischief, madam.

Zel. I'd do any thing to rescue Mr. Brownlow from danger.

Bus. [aside] Mr. Brownlow! O me begin suspect.

Sir Hec. Whatever you determine, madam, must be determined speedily, for they will not be long drawing up in line of battle.

Zel. Then, Sir, I have determined, that Mr. Brownlow shall not lose his life on my account—I am ready to marry Colonel Ormsby.

Sir Hec. Generously resolved, and I'll steer you immediately to my house for the purpose, if you please.

Zel. I attend you, Sir Hector—Bustora, follow me immediately.

Sir Hec. And be assured, my lad, you sha'n't have the worse cheer for drawing your cutlass in defence of your mistress—Come, madam.

X x

[Sings.

“ O

" O the very next morning our engagement proved hot,

" And admiral Benbow received a chain shot.

[Exit with Zelida.

Buf. O what fool me was, not to see lady how her love Mr. Brownlow!—she take paint away—Yet I so tick in head, I no suspect—But love him strange ting! When I was love at Tanjapour, me was ready to do thousand mad action for Balfora—O she was heaven handsome—Fine high cheek bone—little grey eye—mout wide from ear to ear—and teeth more beautiful as brick dust—Then—Yet me am encourage fond idle thought—when lady bid me follow at Sir Hector Strangeways—And must she marry him she no love after all—I have a tink!

[Exit.

The Scene changes to an Apartment at BROWNLOW'S.

Enter BROWNLOW and ORMSBY.

Brown. Colonel Ormsby, you are very punctual, yet if reflection, since I last saw you, has made the same impression upon your heart, that it has upon mine, I shall hope that this call is less hostile than you originally intended it.

Ormsf. Mr. Brownlow, you desired that we should have no war of words; I am not therefore come here to talk, but to request your company a mile or two out of town.

Brown. Why should I betray your confidence, when you see that I have derived no advantage from the perfidy? Zelida is lost to me, as well as to you, and unless you meant that I should be her jailor, you have no just cause to be offended with me for her flight.

Ormsf. Mr. Brownlow, Mr. Brownlow! it is plain by the charge in Zelida's letter, of your having driven her away, it is plain by your own confession of advising her to marry me, that she has been tamper'd with; perhaps you have not in direct, in positive words, solicited her affection; but there is an insidious smoothness of behaviour, a cunning male coquetry, which is more persuasive with an innocent mind, than all the studied modes of verbal solicitation.

Brown. Yet hear me.

Ormsf.

Orms. I'll hear no more, Sir, come along with me.

Brown. When you consider my obligations to you—

Orms. They aggravate the injury!

Brown. But they prevent me from drawing my sword against you, and I will not attend you.

Orms. I'll brand you as a coward to the whole world.

Brown. What will the good opinion of the whole world signify, if I lose my own?

Orms. Draw here, Sir.

Brown. Nay to defend my life— [Draws.]

Enter Sir HECTOR, ZELIDA, Lady DI, and ORSON.

Sir Hec. Hey! what the devil latitude are we in here?

Orms. My dearest Zelida!

Zel. O there's my hand, Colonel Ormsby—You must not kill your best, your truest friend.

Brown. To what are we indebted for this happy revolution?

Lady D. Sir Hector will tell you, brother, when you are reconciled to the Colonel.

Brown. That, Madam, is easily done.—I sincerely give you joy, my dear Ormsby.

Orms. Brownlow, I feel most sensibly the unworthiness of my conduct. I feel also how wretched I must have been to lose your friendship: can you, indeed, forgive me, and impute all my madness to the excess of my love?

Sir Hec. Poh man, of what use is friendship, if it does not teach us to forgive one another's tumbling on the sea of absurdity?

Zel. Mr. Brownlow, besides, knows what it is to be himself in love.

Brown. I do indeed, Madam—know it despairingly.

Lady D. Lord, brother, and never consult me?

Ors. Nor me, uncle?

Sir Hec. You, you puppy.—Well, madam, [to Zelida] I hope you'll now give me leave to salute you as Mrs. Ormsby.

Enter BUSSORA abruptly.

Buff. O heaven he forbid!

Brown. Why so, my honest fellow?

X x 2

Orms.

THE ROMANCE OF AN HOUR:

Ormsf. Buffora, what's the matter?

Buff. Matter him enough. Lady no like—

Zel. Buffora, retire this moment.

Ormsf. Permit him, madam, to stay; for his intelligence leads to a subject, upon which I was going to request your own explanation.

Brown. Why, Buffora, you are out of your senses.

Sir Hec. Zounds, no interruption.—We seem doubling the cape of of a discovery here.

Ormsf. Buffora, your lady, I much fear, has, from motives of generosity, honour'd me with her hand, against the inclination of her heart.

Buff. O, fool so great as I see that—or why she run away from you?

Zel. This madman will betray all!

Brown. But you see your lady is come back, you blockhead.

Buff. Yes, she come for fear of you fight with Colonel.

Sir Hec. The wind is shifted here with a witness.

Orf. And blows fresh against the Colonel, father.

Ormsf. My happiness, no less than my honour, is concern'd in this information.

Buff. O, if one of two, he must be unhappy—the rather you unhappy great deal than lady.

Ormsf. Zelida, you are sincerity itself, and you don't contradict Buffora.

Zel. One cannot force one's inclinations.

Ormsf. I know it too sensibly.

Lady D. But if a lady is ready to marry, what more can a gentleman require?

Zel. O! I am ready to marry Colonel Ormsby.

Ormsf. Ah, Zelida! passionately as I admire you, neither my pride nor my reason can allow me to accept of your hand, if I am not in possession of your heart.

Zel. How happy do you make me—O, Mr. Brownlow, did I not say, when you advised me this morning to marry the Colonel, that he wou'd nobly despise a reluctant heart?

Ormsf. My dear Brownlow, this is an unexpected stroke.

Orf.

Orf. Never mind it, Colonel; I'll marry her myself, with father's consent, if she'll lie up in harbour till I come of age.

Sir Hec. Damme, so you shall boy, if she'll only turn Protestant.

Buff. Dear lady, make uneasiness him all end here.

Zel. What do you mean?

Buff. I mean that you shou'd no blush to be happy. Christian, if him can make lady happy, here him is you know.

[*Pointing to Brownlow.*

Zel. Buffora, never see me more—O Lady Di!

Lady D. My own feelings to a tittle, at the first discovery of my affections for that dear deluder there.

Sir Hec. Me a deluder?

Ormsf. Then we have sustain'd a fresh misfortune, Brownlow.—It wou'd have been some comfort to have seen Zelida your's, since I must resign her for ever: but you are pre-engaged, and my poor girl, like myself, is disappointed in the first search of her heart.

Brown. No, Ormsby, we have sustained no new misfortune, if Buffora is right in his conjectures; for after such uncommon generosity on your part, I need not hesitate to own that this angelic creature is the only object of my affections.

Zel. Heavens! is it possible!

Sir Hec. Zounds, will the wind never have done shifting?

Ormsf. I wou'd offer no violence to Zelida's inclination—Speak, my sweetest girl.

Zel. I cannot speak.

Buff. Oh lady, do no fear to tell true.

Brown. My lovely Zelida, look up.

Zel. Your affections are placed upon another.

Brown. It was necessary to make you think so, before I knew the peculiar nobleness of Ormsby's sentiments.

Sir Hec. Come, come, don't let us waste powder in idle salutes.

Zel. I am overwhelm'd with distress.

Brown. And you still persist in saying *no* to my solicitation?

Zel. What wou'd you have me say?

Brown. I'd have you say *yes*.

Zel.

Zel. Why *no* often means *yes* among the ladies of England, does it not?

Brown. Bewitching creature! thus let me thank you. [*kissing her hand.*]

Ormsf. 'Tis my turn to wish you joy, Brownlow, and I do it most heartily.

Sir Hec. So do we all.—This is a glorious voyage, indeed.

Orf. And the ship may be paid off, father, for there seems to be an end of the service.

Lady D. My dearest sister [*salutes Zelida*] this is a superlative blessing—and I believe there are not two such women as ourselves in any one house of this kingdom.

Zel. O, Madam, I am too happy—but Buffora! my faithful Buffora!

Buff. Will you never see me more now, lady?

Zel. Mr. Brownlow, Colonel Ormsby, we are all indebted to my good Buffora, and must all think of methods to reward him.

Buff. I am too reward in see you happy, Lady. And Gento, you know, he scorn any other reward, than him own feelings, for behave like honest man.

Zel. What must I feel on this occasion, then? My joy is so excessive, I think the whole a dream; yet if this company is but pleased my dream will last for ever. [*Exeunt omnes.*]

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

E P I L O G U E.

WRITTEN BY MR. KELLY.

SPOKEN BY MRS. BULKLEY.

SOMEbody says, but I forgot his name,
That howe'er faults or follies we may blame,
We're all in turn, tho' all extremely wise,
The very things we laugh at, or despise——
The bold fox-hunter just come up to town,
From—"Yoiks, bark forward," loves to seem a clown:
Thro' pride tears up politeness by the roots——
Ne'er combs his hair—and visits you in boots——
Milkops alone, he thinks their forms shou'd deck,
And scorns the man that fears to break a neck——
In three months time, how alter'd is his note,
His head's all wings, or bak'd in papilotte——
The honest buckskin which once clear'd the ditches,
Our modern Nimrod turns to fatten breeches,
And grown half female, wondrous to relate!
He screams in slumber at a five-bar'd gate.
The city buck, accusom'd long to bruise,
Who swears at France, and damns all "parley-voos;"
If but one week from Margate led at most,
To swill and smuggle on the Flemish coast,
Returning bawls in ev'ry dowdy's face——
"Comment charmantè, quelle ravissant grace!"

[Spoken in the English accent:

And in due course from Aldgate to the Strand,
Raves of a cotilloon, and allemand.

Monsieur, indeed, with cockney is quite even,
Tho' much to joke upon this nation given——

He calls a Briton—"Barbare, Unbelief!"

Yet leaves his frogs with rapture for roast beef;

And

*And finds a ready fortune to be made is,
 In rouge for men, and perriwigs for ladies.
 At foul corruption, Surly tears his throat—
 He scorns to give a shilling for a vote;
 But mark the riot of the county round,
 And every voice has cost him twenty pound.
 There some, who think our liberties divine,
 Will eat them thro', in turkey, or in chine—
 And others, while at venal tools they rail,
 Drown their poor country in a butt of ale.*

*But while our bards these gen'ral faults make known
 Pray let them hear a little of their own.
 How many authors of our modern stage,
 Affect to rise the wonders of their age,
 By bare translations from Moliere, Corneille,
 Racine, and numbers needless here to tell—
 Yet each a jackdaw, dress'd in foreign plumes,
 On his own beauty saucily presumes;
 Looks on the parent bird with haughty eyes,
 From whom entirely he purloin'd his dyes;
 Or solely tells us when he comes to print,
 Tho' all is stolen—He borrow'd but a hint—
 Ah that these daws were fortunately tost on
 Thy coasts Connecticut, or thine O Boston!
 Their noblest flights thou might'st for ever mar,
 And spoil their feathers, with a little tar.—*

*Whether by policy or justice led,
 A diff'rent path our author means to tread;
 And tho' a petty dealer, will not sell
 As his own goods, a thought of MARMONTEL—
 The timid ZELIDA you saw to-night,
 In that great master first beheld the light;
 And if you hail her now dramatic morn,
 I'll ever bless the moment she was born.*

T H E S P I S:

OR, A

CRITICAL EXAMINATION

INTO THE

MERITS of all the Principal PERFORMERS

BELONGING TO

DRURY-LANE THEATRE.

Yy

[illegible]

T H E S P I R I T S

О. Р. А.

CRITICAL EXAMINATION

ЭНТ ОТИ

Merits of all the Principal Performers

BELONGING TO

DRURY-LANE THEATRE.

77

T H E S P I S.

B O O K I.

BOLD is his task in this discerning age,
When every witling prates about the stage;
And some pert title arrogantly brings
To trace up nature through her noblest springs:
Bold, in such times, his task must be allow'd
Who seeks to form a judgment for the crowd;
Presumes the public sentiment to guide,
And speaks at once to prejudice and pride—
Of all the studies in these happier days,
By which we soar, ambitiously to praise;
Of all the fine performances of art,
Which charm the eye, or captivate the heart;
None like the stage our admiration draws;
Or gains such high, and merited applause.
Yet, has this art unhappily no rules
To check the vain impertinence of fools,
To point out rude deformity from grace,
And strike a line 'twixt acting and grimace.

HIGH as the town with reverence we may name,
And stamp its general sentiments to fame;
Loud as perhaps, we echo to its voice,
And pay a boundless homage to its choice;
Still, if we look minutely, we shall find
Each single judge so impotent or blind,
That even the actor whom we most admire,
For ease or humour, dignity or fire,
Shall often blush to meet the ill-earn'd bays,
And pine beneath an infamy of praise.

How oft, soul-searching GARRICK, have I hung
 On every accent of that wond'rous tongue;
 When in Old LEAR, returning into sense,
 And faintly guessing at some past offence,
 To gain CORDELIA's pardon thou hast pray'd,
 And knelt by instinct with that suffering maid!
 How has my breast then labour'd with its sigh,
 And the big sorrow deluged all my eye;
 While keen delight perform'd a traitor's part,
 And ach'd intensely round my struggling heart!
 Yet, in those moments, when I sought to find
 An equal transport in the public mind;
 When I believed a sympathy wou'd shine
 In every eye as honestly as mine;
 A lifeless pause perhaps, has gloom'd along,
 And drowsy dulness sat upon the throng!
 Enormous curls have slept on empty blocks,
 Or well-bred curtsies shot from box to box:
 Whereas, when prisoner, and in fetters bound,
 A peal of praise has thunder'd all around,
 And every hand employ'd its utmost pains,
 To clap the mighty merit—of the chains.

When things like these for ever give offence,
 And empty shew is lifted over sense:
 When men throw nature negligently by,
 And judge not from the feelings, but the eye;
 Nay, when our actors, in their busiest parts,
 While fear or hope stand beating at our hearts,
 From the warm scene may scandalously run,
 To feast the galleries with an instant pun;
 Then, keen-eyed satire consciously should rise,
 And hold a mirror to the public eyes;
 Alike regardless of her foe or friend,
 With candour blame, with honesty commend;
 Applaud, if right, the man she may detest,
 And strike, if wrong, the brother of her breast.

'Tis on the stage, as 'tis in life, we find
No single man quite excellent in mind;
Nor do we meet a bosom so depraved,
So lost in vice, and utterly enslaved,
But what at times, some transient spark of grace
Has beam'd his eye, and flush'd upon his face;
With pitying warmth intuitively stole,
And pierced the Stygian fable of his soul.
Therefore, unlike some brothers of the pen,
Who judg'd of actors as they judg'd of men;
In wild extremes ridiculously trod,
And drew, by turns, a dæmon or a god;
My tints from life shall regularly glow,
And paint both faults and beauties as they grow;
Convinced, the truest pictures must be made,
Where light is blended properly with shade.

Long in the annals of theatric fame,
Has truth graced GARRICK with a foremost name;
Long in a wide diversity of parts,
Allow'd his double empire o'er our hearts;
Either in mirth to laugh us to excess,
Or where he weeps, to load us with distress—
Nor is it strange, that even in partial days,
He gains so high an eminence of praise;
When his united requisites are more,
Than ever centred in one mind before:
Say, if we search minutely, from the age
In which old THESPIS first began the stage,
And range through all the celebrated climes,
In which it flourish'd, to the present times,
Where shall we find an actor who has prest,
With such extensive force upon the breast,
Fill'd such opposing characters for years,
Unmatch'd, alike, in laughter or in tears?
Others, perhaps the greatest of their hour,
Whom fame extoll'd as prodigies of power,

Have

Have yet to scanty limits been confined,
 And shewn but one dull tendency of mind;
 On bold blank-verse heroically rose,
 Or meanly ambled upon humbler prose—
 OTHELLO's form a BETTERTON might wear,
 And rend the soul with horror and despair;
 BOOTH might with conscious majesty declaim,
 And build on CATO a substantial name;
 In WILDAIR, WILKES most certainly might soar,
 And CIBBER's fop set millions in a roar;
 But which of these like GARRICK could appear,
 In ROMEO, SHARPE, in DRUGGER, and in LEAR;
 Fill the wide rounds of passion as they fall,
 And shine with equal excellence in all?

YET, though thus warm I freely pour my thoughts,
 I still must think that GARRICK has his faults;
 Some casual errors in his parts, which run
 As specks sometimes will fasten on the sun;
 Even in his LEAR, where desperately wild,
 He stabs the ruffians to preserve his child;
 And quite worn out with tenderness and rage,
 Leans, wholly spent, and breathless on the stage;
 Then, while the tide of sympathy has rose,
 And every bosom labour'd with his woes,
 Then have I seen him negligently fall,
 Full with his face against the prison wall,
 Snatch every feature strangely from our sight,
 And check the flood of exquisite delight.

Though famed APELLES, at a touch could give,
 The warming canvass almost how to live;
 Though scarce to less than deity, when grown,
 He call'd out new creations of his own;
 Yet, when the weakness of his art he saw,
 The Grecian father's agony to draw,
 'Twas wise, a veil upon his face to throw,
 Whose pangs he found impossible to shew;

But when, even Shakespeare never could possess
 Too big a grief for GARRICK to express,
 When his sharp eye so piercingly can roll,
 And dart such instant passions through the soul,
 'Tis doubly wrong, the tenderer the case,
 To hide the wonderful workings of his face;
 To check our hopes, or play upon our fears,
 And damp the rich-soul'd luxury of tears.

For five long years in dark oblivion thrown,
 Has LEE remain'd, neglected and unknown,
 Unless, when chance, on some capricious start,
 Has kindly blest him with a decent part;
 Yet was this LEE, at one auspicious hour,
 Allow'd to boast a little share of power;
 Was thought in various characters to please,
 And famed no less for energy than ease—
 For me, who feel a tenderness of breast,
 Where'er a dawn of merit seems oppress'd,
 I may, perhaps, be partial to his faults;
 And do him more than justice in my thoughts;
 But when I see the genuine passions rise,
 Which flame in ABOAN's red resenting eyes;
 When I behold in VERNISH's disgrace
 The struggling soul so stamp'd upon the face;
 Or meet in BELMONT with that dangerous art,
 Which even for crimes, can plead about the heart:
 I own, it wounds my temper and my taste
 To find him still so despicably placed;
 Sent on in FRENCHMEN, RALEIGHS, and GLENDOWERS;
 While things like PACKER surfeit us for hours,
 'Tis true that LEE has fatally imbibed
 A mode of speech not easily described;
 A nice affected drawlingness of phrase,
 A wire-drawn tone in every thing he plays;
 With which, too oft, most execrably fine,
 He racks a word, and tortures out a line—

Yet

Yet still has LEE a consequence of form,
 A voice and look so capable to warm,
 A stage-struck heat so vehemently strong,
 With such a piercing consciousness of wrong,
 That even when BARRY, in his noblest course,
 Some few weeks since exerted all his force;
 Then did this LEE burst on us in a blaze,
 And wake us all to wonder and to praise;
 Give vile IAGO's deeply scheming ire
 The boldest touches of dramatic fire,
 And swell brave PIERRE with such a generous flame
 That left even JAFFIER but a second fame.
 Hence, mean foe'er, as managers may prize,
 I look on LEE with very different eyes,
 And freely place however they disdain,
 His chair next GARRICK's high in Drury-Lane.

The greatest charge our little judges lay
 When HOLLAND's worth they critically weigh,
 Is, that in all the characters he tries,
 His master GARRICK ever fills his eyes;
 That meanly servile in his walk of parts,
 He strives to shine by imitative arts,
 And now, so dull a copyist is grown,
 To want all sense and feeling of his own.
 In this nice age, when fatally disgraced,
 Poor sense falls martyr'd at the shrine of taste;
 When a mere word, indefinite and vain,
 The random coinage of the coxcomb's brain;
 By truth and judgment wholly unconfined,
 And differing still in every different mind,
 Usurps the air of sentiment, to pass
 For sterling gold her despicable brass;
 Then imitation certainly must fall
 And raise the general enmity of all;
 Must own the pride-taught sentence to be just,
 And lick the foot that tramples it in dust.

Yet,

Yet, sure, if GARRICK hitherto has ran
By reason's line, and justly laid his plan
On that exalted principle of art,
Which knocks with truth's bold hand against the heart;
If in the various characters he plays
The genuine form of nature he conveys,
And hits in short, upon that happy right,
Which gives the finest essence of delight;
Those who affect to turn away the head
When HOLLAND seeks his vestiges to tread,
Must argue less from judgment than from whim,
Since copying nature is to copy him.
But, why at all should critics proudly start,
And seem to frown on imitative art?
Where worth or fame our admiration raise,
A wish to copy is a kind of praise—
Say in this age, some genius shou'd we find
So rich in thought, and vigorous in mind,
As gave the fury of a stage desire,
Even the pale glimm'ring of a SHAKESPEAR's fire;
Should we not all inevitably throng
To hail the glowing wonders of his song,
And with a wild munificence reward
The faintest traces of our deathless bard?
For me, unapt to criticise in haste,
And little guilty of a modern taste;
I own this HOLLAND ever my offence,
But where he draws from GARRICK, and from sense;
While he does this, I patiently attend,
And often find no little to commend;
With honest warmth his plaudit I can hear,
And join myself the tribute of a tear.
But when some air-born fancy to pursue,
He lets his master once escape his view;
When much too great for imitation grown,
He boldly seeks a manner of his own,

Sententious, dull, and heavy, he appears,
 His words like weights hang dragging on our ears;
 Fatigue to death in spite of all our power,
 And drawl the minute's sentence to an hour—
 Nor is this all, a stupid sort of stare,
 A starch'd, stiff, stalling, awkwardness of air,
 Absorb at once his figure and his face,
 And scorn all marks of nature and of grace;
 While the purs'd lips, to wind up every pause,
 Important swell and bully for applause.

— Few for so short an Interval have gain'd
 A higher rank than POWELL has obtain'd;
 And few, in fact, at present on the stage,
 Deserve a warmer notice from the age.
 Form'd with some lines that happily express
 No little sense of pity and distress;
 And form'd with tones that frequently impart
 No little share of softness to the heart,
 On many minds he tenderly can steal,
 And teach a drowsy auditor to feel.
 Hence, in those parts where wretchedness and years
 Alarm alike our pity and our fears,
 Where the poor LUSIGNAN, from prison led,
 Shakes the white honours of his sacred head:
 O'er his sweet Pagan tenderly complains,
 And calls again for darkness, and for chains;
 Or, where old HENRY, sick'ning with despair,
 Upbraids the wildness of his madcap heir;
 In parts like these to POWELL I attend.
 A strong admirer, and a steady friend.—
 But, when in gay LOTHARIO he wou'd shew,
 The sprightly airs of libertine and beau;
 Or give in TOWNLY, to a modish wife,
 The nicer touches of superior life;
 Not all the scrapes, or cringes which he tries,
 Those paltry arts of little men to rise;

The

The scorn of sense and judgment can remove,
Or teach one honest blockhead to approve.

As yet, two raw young striplings on the stage,
Unfit for fight, tho' burning to engage,
Led on by hope, courageously to press,
— Yet taught by sense, to practise for success;
No judgment, now, of CAUTHERLY I frame;
Nor settle BENSLY's title to a name.—
Where first essays are diffidently tried,
A candid mind must cautiously decide;
Nor rashly risk opinions, which in time
The muse herself may censure as a crime.

Where the gay Muse in laughter loves to sport,
And brisk THALIA holds her hum'rous court,
YATES with high rank, for ever must be placed,
Who blends such strict propriety with taste;
From nature's fount so regularly draws,
And never seeks to trick us of applause.
Mark, when he plays, no vacancy of face,
No wand'ring eye, or ignorant grimace,
Is rudely suffer'd once to intervene,
Or check the growing business of a scene;
Nay, in his silence, happily employ'd,
He looks continual meaning on the void;
Bids every glance with character be fraught,
And swells each muscle with a burst of thought.
Hence, in those cruder sections of a part,
Where want of humour must be fill'd by art,
Where the poor poet in some luckless fit
Mistakes a dull prolixity for wit;
His merit shines with undiminish'd rays,
And lifts whole troops of RESTLESS's to praise.—
Yet there are times, when spite of all his care,
Our taste must bristle, and our sense must stare:
When a new part unhappily he plays,
A thousand doubts perplex him, and amaze;

Fast from himself he tremblingly retires,
Nor trusts that worth which all the world admires;
But on a sea of causeless terror tost,
Allows both mind and memory to be lost.

BUT tho' on YATES the comic muse may shower
An ample fund of humour and of power;

Tho' in his walk of characters he claims

So high a place among theatric names,

Still there are others in her smiles who share,

And prove her generous as they know her fair.

Oft in some whim, the buxom nymph will try

To pass for KING upon the public eye:

On TOM or RANGER, wantonly will seize

And give us all his spirit and his ease:

Again, in PRATTLE physically prim,

She steals each look and attitude from him;

And like a virgin, whose unpractis'd breast

Some blooming youth entirely has possess'd;

Who, if mischance unhappily should start,

To wound the face that captivates her heart;

Feels no unkind propensity to rove,

But throbs all pitying with a softer love;

So, when emaciate with disease and years,

Her fav'rite KING in OGLEBY appears,

The comic muse exerts unusual force

To call down laughter from its richest source;

Glow with a flame additionally warm,

And seems in more than raptures with his form—

O! that the goddess, in some lucky hour

Wou'd wisely try the utmost of her power,

Wou'd tell her KING, that in the well-bred smart,

Too great a pertness quite destroys the part;

And, when a BASSET's habit he wou'd wear,

Dismiss the saucy SMATTER from his air.

VERNON to favour, ne'er can have pretence,

A finger truly,—and disgraced with sense!

Why should a fellow blest with such a strain,
 As still can charm us to the verge of pain;
 The melting soul in extasy absorb,
 And almost pluck a planet from its orb;
 Why should he strive in such a sing-song age,
 To soar by sterling merit on the stage,
 Or seek by knowledge in dramatic laws,
 To reach a vulgar MASCULINE applause?
 Did he indeed, ne'er generously rise
 Beyond the TOMB TALE, or the LONDON CRIES,
 With which of late, so dead to every shame,
 He meanly pimp'd for prostituted fame,
 Some room for easy pardon might be found,
 And dullness join most lovingly with sound;
 But, when PHARNACES, or MACHEATH we see
 So nerv'd with thought, so spirited and free,
 When even his flimsiest characters of song
 Can strike our minds so wonderfully strong;
 Our honest rage eternally must live,
 And prudence make it madness to forgive.—

— PALMER, from playing almost every night,
 Has grown so long familiar to our sight,
 That even in scenes scarce possible to bear,
 We kindly rate him as a decent player.
 Yet, since the stage it's first existence drew,
 An odder compound never struck our view;
 Nor did the drama ever yet produce
 So bad an actor half so fit for use.
 Mark with what grace his person is design'd,
 For parts of life, and characters refin'd;
 Yet, that strange shambling of deportment see,
 Tho' easy, stiff; and manacled, tho' free;
 Tho' strait, yet doubled; tortur'd, tho' in form;
 Aukward, tho' bred; and spiritless tho' warm—
 Tho' fraught with tones articulate and clear,
 He keeps an endless screaming on the ear:

Howls

Howls out young OAKLEY in such hideous strains,
 As midnight wolves might use upon the plains;
 And strangles poor Sir BRILLIANT in a note
 Too nicely horrid for a human throat.
 But, tho' in wide and capital respects,
 I see in PALMER manifest defects;
 Tho' that address so terrible must seem,
 And that vile voice excruciate with it's scream;
 Yet, ever ready in the heaviest parts,
 He scorns all aid from despicable arts;
 And ever master of his author's aim,
 Just to his sense, and cautious of his fame,
 With secret pleasure I behold him rise,
 And cry, "Peace," always, to my ears and eyes—

If strong good sense, and latitude of mind,
 A keen conception, and a taste refined,
 A long acquaintance with those nicer arts
 That read thro' life, and study thro' our hearts,
 An actor's name with certainty might raise,
 Or bind his temples with the generous bays,
 Who against LOVE a syllable cou'd breathe,
 Or once dispute his title to a wreath?
 But, 'tis not taste or judgment which can give
 An actor's name eternally to live;
 Or even the widest knowledge of mankind,
 Which stamps thro' time, his image on the mind—
 Hence, tho' in FALSTAFF, LOVE has oft express'd,
 A nice observance of the human breast;
 Tho' in his BAYS we readily admire
 The critic's clearness and the actor's fire,
 Yet, when we see him on GRANADA's throne,
 The dupe of ZARA's fury and his own;
 Or mark in GLOSTER, with what nerveless rage
 He drives poor SHORE to wander from the stage,
 We all lament the cruelty of fate,
 Which damns so good an actor into state,

And find these sceptres quite as dangerous things
To mimic monarchs as to actual kings—

IN foreign footmen, BADDELY alone
Preserves the native nasilness of tone,
And in his manner strongly shews ally'd
Their genuine turn of abjectness and pride;
If proofs are wanting, on CANTON I call,
And ask the general sentiments of all—
Here then, secure of competence and name,
He ought to rest his fortune and his fame,
And not in buckish epilogues, which spring
With real life from nobody but KING;

At random risque, the favour which we shower
On scenes more suited to his taste and power—

Blest with the happiest nothingness of form,
Which nature e'er with being strove to warm;
On life's just scale scarce capable to stand,
A kind of mandrake in creation's hand;
See DODD, in all his tininess of state,
Resist his stars, and counteract his fate,
On actual wants preposterously shine,
Absurdly great, and despicably fine—
Fram'd at his birth a coxcomb for the stage,
He soars the foremost fribble of the age,
And struck by chance on some egregious plan,
A mere nice, prim epitome of man,
In every coinage of the poet's brain,
Who blends alike the worthless and the vain;
Who in such parts as FADDLE, has design'd
A fopling's figure for a villain's mind;
There DODD's fine want of all exterior weight,
New points our laugh, or doubly whets our hate,
Hangs the vile slave more openly in morn,
And brands him still with aggravated scorn—
But when at WILDAIR's elegance he tries,
Or seeks in well-bred NOVELTY to rise;

When

When on those parts he fatally will strike,
 Which urge no scorn, and furnish no dislike,
 There all his nice inanity misplaced,
 Disgusts alike our judgment and our taste:
 There he provokes our ridicule, or rage,
 And melts poor WILDAIR down into a page—
 'Tis true, in life we frequently behold
 A daring spirit in the smallest mould,
 And ne'er from face or person think to find
 The latent turn of principle or mind:
 But in the drama, with creative fire,
 We give each part the person we desire.
 Expect all grace in BEVIL's shou'd be seen,
 But ask for SNEAK's diminutive and mean—
 Hence, if deceived, that fascinating rage
 Which nerves the scene, and vivifies the stage,
 Calls out illusion thro' the roar of strife,
 And warms the moral fiction into life;
 That instant flags, no more to be possess'd,
 And spreads one torpid dullness thro' the breast—
 Born to delight a laughter-loving age,
 And give fresh funds of humour to the stage;
 Mark with what strength of unaffected ease,
 That happy WESTON commonly can please;
 Tho' bold, yet simple; forcible tho' cool;
 Fine without trick; and finish'd without rule—
 In those still scenes of *scarce existing* life,
 Where SNEAK breathes only to obey a wife;
 Or where poor DRUGGER publicly display'd,
 Hangs out the mere dull animal of trade;
 There WESTON's worth with certainty may rest,
 Nor fear the strictest rigidity of test;
 There a sublime stupidity of face,
 As dead to sense as destitute of grace,
 A fix'd, relaxless vacancy of lines,
 With such true genius generally shines,

That

That quite surpriz'd, though satisfied we gaze,
 And all is mirth, astonishment, and praise—
 Of all the walks in which the humorous power
 Of comic wit can exercise an hour;
 Perhaps, that cold inanimated way
 In which an actor never seems to play;
 In which the chiefest merit of a part
 Exists entirely in the want of art;
 The strongest force of requisites may claim,
 And prove the hardest avenue to fame—
 To WESTON's praise, then generously true,
 The muse shall raise him publicly to view;
 A first-rate actor of the NOKES's kind,
 Best when least shewn, and happiest when confined—
 Yet when by some fatality misled,
 A rage for praise has overset his head;
 When grown quite arch he madly quits his place,
 And seeks to soar by pertness and grimace;
 When in attempting at some paltry joke,
 The fine dry dullness of his face is broke,
 With just disdain I turn my head aside,
 And damn alike his ignorance and pride—

To say that HAVARD never has a claim
 To some small portion of theatric fame;
 To say quite roundly, that we never shed
 Some transient gleams of favour on his head,
 The public knowledge grossly would abuse,
 And fix a lasting stigma on the muse;
 Yet, when our eye upon his claim we throw,
 And see what lifeless plaudits we bestow;
 When through his round of requisites we trace,
 Think on his voice, his figure, and his face,
 And find plain sense, and memory, at most
 Are all the mighty merits he can boast,
 We steal in pity from our stricter plan,
 To praise his private virtues as a man,

A a a

And

And while the charms of genuine worth engage,
 — Detest the hour he first beheld a stage.

HURST, with his talents for life's ancient scenes,
 Must rise in time, if mindful of the means;
 But when with years, and with diseases bow'd,
 What need of tones extravagantly loud?
 LAURENCE may counsel, and express his fears,
 Yet shew some kind attention to our ears;
 And woe-worn ADAM may exclaim for bread,
 Without once splitting a spectator's head—
 He who would seize an audience by the heart,
 Should always judge the nature of his part,
 And in proportion as the scene requires,
 Suppress the latent-working of his fires;
 Since too much force propriety destroys,
 And white-hair'd grief is never mark'd by noise—
 Should poor old LEAR forget his tott'ring gait
 To ape young AMMON's majesty and state,
 Or godlike CATO from his seat advance,
 To treat the grinning gallery with a dance;
 With what a wild amazement would we stare
 And check the madd'ning progress of the player?
 If then with HURST we mildly would engage,
 And ask the various properties of age,
 Would palsied limbs be all he wish'd to own,
 Or would he give it feebleness of tone?

— But mark with what vulgarity of stare,
 What low unmeaning impudence of air
 That mud-eyed MOONY, whose relentless face,
 No blush e'er crimson'd with a moment's grace,
 Gapes round the house, regardless of his part,
 All brass in front, and marble all in heart;
 For him no scene, however it may flow
 With high-wrought wit, or agonizing woe,
 Once on his breast can fortunately steal,
 Or teach that ruthless bosom how to feel—

Yet,

Yet, though cut off from every just pretence
 To taste, to nature, decency and sense,
 Though no blest beam of sympathy ere stole
 To rouse the deep stagnation of his soul;
 Still, while O'CUTTER happily can please
 With brainless bravery, and with brutal ease;
 While every human principle of breast,
 Falls vilely martyr'd to an Irish jest,
 There his wide want of sentiment and shame,
 So nicely tallies with the poet's aim,
 That truth herself must combat in his cause,
 And yield the crown of infamous applause—

Not so the modest ACKMAN strikes our view,
 Whose parts, though neither eminent nor new,
 Still from his strict propriety and care,
 Must here be rank'd a tolerable player.
 Small as his various characters appear,
 He ne'er offends our vision, or our ear,
 But always decent, perfect, and in place,
 Fills his short walk with judgment and with grace—
 Yet not on words this praise alone to trust,
 I name his ROBERT, to confirm it just;
 And ask the sentence of the reader's heart,
 If in this short, and unimportant part,
 An actor's force can fortunately find
 An instant passage to the general mind;
 Whether to truth we offer much offence,
 Whene'er we own his judgment and his sense.
 'Tis not a circuit of five hundred lines
 Through which a hero rants away or whines,
 That e'er an actor's merit can decide,
 Or serve the candid critic for a guide.—
 The poor plain soldier while the battle glows,
 Who darts courageous on his gathering foes;
 With dauntless breast beholds his danger rife,
 And nobly scorns to shudder though he dies;

Is, in my thought, a much more worthy name
 Than he, who dead to honour and to shame,
 Howe'er hung round with title or command,
 Intrench'd in dastard discipline can stand;
 On doubtful order hesitate to fight,
 And rush on noon-day error to be right.

Where worth, untutor'd, in a down-right part,
 Charms from a bold benignity of heart,
 And howe'er lowly, simple, or undrest,
 Grows through its genuine beauty on the breast,
 There PARSONS, always, our attention draws,
 And seldom fails of general applause.
 When wild PHILASTER's madly erring rage
 Prepares to stab his mistress on the stage;
 Does not each bosom exquisitely glow,
 When honest PARSONS wards away the blow?
 And does not justice strongly wish to crown
 The plain, blunt bravery of the generous clown?
 Small as the part is, every eye can find
 A warm conception in the actor's mind;
 And point out various characters of name
 Which he might rescue from immediate shame.

Yet though thus strenuous, PARSONS, in thy praise
 The candid muse her sentiment conveys,
 Still undebauch'd by flattery or pride,
 From nature start not fatally aside;
 Nor spurn those short, yet entertaining rounds
 On which thy worth she principally founds,
 Through idle hopes ambitiously to climb
 In parts of grace, or characters sublime.
 Almost as soon of MOODY would she hear,
 In wild ORESTES, or exclaiming LEAR,
 As see thee once inclinable to seize
 On polish'd casts of elegance and ease;
 And think as soon of half-created DOPP,
 For high-soul'd BRUTUS, or an actual God,

As find thee madly purpos'd to rehearse
A single sentence of heroic verse.

BRANSBY to greatness never makes pretence;
Yet seldom strikes at decency or sense;
But humbly careful, through the round he plays,
Avoids all censure, if he meets no praise.—

AICKIN has various requisites to please;
A handsome person, and an inborn ease.
A manly accent, forcible and clear,
A ready memory, and a happy ear—
And, if the poet with prophetic verse
Through fate's dark womb can accurately pierce,
An hour will come, when time's improving hand
Shall teach his taste and judgment to expand,
And in dramatic annals mark him fair,
Though not a great, a serviceable player.

BURTON is one of those unnoticed things,
Who make good lords, or secondary kings,
The liveliest mind to stupefaction lull,
So wisely flat, and rationally dull.—
And yet, with all that wonderous weight of lead,
Which bounteous fate has given him for a head,
He still possesses such amazing arts
To rise quite perfect in the heaviest parts,
That all with me must highly praise his pains,
And own his memory, though they doubt his brains.

But now, let justice doubly arm the muse,
And tenfold candour consecrate her views;
For now, her genuine equity of breast
Must stand a keen unmitigating test;
And those who think, that friendship or offence
Are yet unmingled in the poet's sense,
May fear when female characters he draws,
Left truth should suffer from a softer cause.
Indeed, where female merit must be tried,
'Tis hard to judge, and dangerous to decide;

A secret something in our breasts will warm
 Where eyes can languish, and where lips can charm;
 And age itself instinctively will glow,
 To press a ball of animated snow:
 But yet through all the pleadings we can trace
 The wondrous pleadings of a heavenly face,
 The bard still mindful of desert alone,
 All partial ties will honestly disown;
 From sacred conscience shudder to depart,
 And speak his judgment, though he wounds his heart.

VINCENT and WRIGHT, for what the poet cares,
 May warble sweetly through some trifling airs;
 But still some ray of kind perception rests
 With genial heat upon their mindless breasts:
 They still must raise our pity or offence,
 Whene'er they claim an intercourse with sense.

Not so the gentle BADDELY, whose form
 Sweet as her voice, can never fail to charm;
 Whose melting strain no ARNE's eccentric skill,
 As yet has tortured into modern thrill;
 She, if our bosoms are not wholly steel,
 In poor OPHELIA forces us to feel;
 From envy's self roots up the ling'ring sigh,
 And spreads red anguish o'er her madd'ning eye—
 Yet of such gifts, though happily possess'd,
 She rather grows, than rushes on the breast,
 And rather winds the passions to her course,
 Than strives to storm them by immediate force;
 Hence, in the soft and tender walks alone,
 Her latent fund of talents must be shewn;
 And here a just distinction she must bear,
 If train'd with proper nicety and care—

But how of REYNOLD shall I speak my thoughts,
 Whose merits mix so strangely with her faults,
 That truth quite wavers at a loss to move,
 Nor knows which well, to censure or approve.—

Through

Through the long mazes of her country part,
 Where all should seem so innocent of art,
 Her well form'd fear with flippancy she blends,
 And in one moment pleases and offends;
 With a pert smartness hateful to be known,
 Unites a fine rusticity of tone,
 And bids a strong simplicity appear
 Through all the vilest knowingness of leer.
 Her person too, one endless scene of strife,
 Though warm'd with youth, is destitute of life;
 And rests in fact too difficult to draw,
 Flimsy though free, and delicate though raw.

HOPKINS in MILWOOD, and the third-rate cast,
 To public favour rushes on so fast,
 That though unequal, widely to engage
 With many first class parts upon the stage;
 Still, if her rank we accurately trace,
 And give her worth due eminence of place,
 Not six perhaps, through BRITAIN we shall find
 But what she leaves considerably behind.—

Form'd for those coarse and vulgar scenes of life,
 Where low-bred rudeness always breathes in strife,
 Where in some blessed unison we find
 The deadliest temper with the narrowest mind;
 The boldest front that never knew a fear,
 The flintiest eye that never shed a tear;
 There not an actress, certainly, alive
 Can e'er dispute pre-eminence with CLIVE—
 But, when to taste she makes the least pretence,
 Or madly aims at elegance and sense;
 When at high life she despicably tries,
 And flares her frowzy tiffue on our eyes,
 There the wide waddle, and the ceaseless bawl,
 Provoke the general ridicule of all;
 And nought but NEWGATE LUCY we can know,
 Trick'd out, and dizzied for some city shew.—

And here all burning with ingenuous shame,
 The bard his recent virulence must name,
 When, with a ruffian cruelty, he flew
 To rake up private characters to view;
 And, dead to candour, quite forgot to spare
 The helpless woman in the wounded player.—
 Here then, as odious utterly to light,
 He damns the passage to eternal night;
 From every breast, entreats it may be thrown,
 To sting with ceaseless justice in his own.

POPE, though unable wholly to arrive
 At all the fine vulgarity of CLIVE,
 Yet with almost her readiness enjoys
 A coarse wrote scene of turbulence and noise;
 And like CLIVE too, in those superior spheres,
 Where ease delights and elegance endears,
 That shapeless form to grace so unally'd;
 That roaring laugh, and manliness of stride;
 In spite of pity, force us to be just,
 And all we feel is hatred or disgust.—

Is it not odd, that still upon the stage
 So few attend to person or to age;
 That awkward, clumsy, or distorted shapes,
 Like new caught bears, or badly tutor'd apes,
 Fast from those parts ridiculously crowd,
 In which their honest merits are allow'd,
 To stain some high and educated place,
 Which asks the finest polishes of grace?
 Is it not odd too, that the hoary head
 By some strange dæmon ludicrously led,
 From those grave casts eternally withdraws,
 In which it still can totter with applause,
 To mumble, quite insensible of shame,
 Some scene all youthful energy and flame?—
 But such, alas! is ignorance or pride,
 That self still kindly will for self decide,

And

And while the passions rule the giddy hour,
We all mistake our wishes for our power.—

But see where sprightly **ABINGTON** appears,
Happy alike in person and in years;
Pleasing, tho' post; familiar, tho' polite;
Nervous, tho' free; and spirited, tho' light:
As long as ease, vivacity, or fire,
Can find a cheerful audience to admire,
With just regard her talents it will rate,
Strong, if not fine, and various, if not great.

PRITCHARD, tho' now unequal to her prime,
And withering swiftly on the stalk of time;
Yet still retains a magic kind of art,
To charm the eye, and twist about the heart,
Throws some refined delusion o'er the stage,
And quite absorbs infirmity and age;
Yet form'd, perhaps, the moment of her birth
For humour chiefly, elegance and mirth,
Her tragic parts are less replete with life
Than **ESTIFANIA**, or the Jealous Wife;
Hence, tho' I always honestly admire
Her **MACBETH**'s madness, and her **ZARA**'s fire,
Still when I see her obviously distress'd
To hurl the passion strongly on my breast;
When I behold her in this dang'rous course,
Struggling for strength, and straining after force,
I wish her kindly in that walk of ease
Where every line instructed how to please,
Springs from her lips superlatively warm,
Sure to delight, and positive to charm.—

O that the hour, whene'er it is design'd
To bless the well-known virtues of the mind,
On **PALMER**'s breast might charitably shower
Some distant dawnings of the mother's power,
One casual gleam of **PRITCHARD** might dispense,
And wake the beauteous statue into sense,

B b b

That

That no just censure on our fav'rite's race
May brand her name with relative disgrace.

YATES, with such wond'rous requisites to charm,
Such powers of face, and majesty of form;
Such genuine grandeur with such sweetness join'd,
So clear a voice, and accurate a mind,
In fame's first seat must certainly be placed,
While BRITAIN boasts of judgment, or of taste—
Say, in what walk of greatness, or of grace,
This matchless woman justly shall we place,
In which she still possesses not an art,
To melt, to fire, to agonize the heart?
If in CORDELIA to our minds we raise,
The more than magic softness she displays,
Will not a gush of instant pity spring,
To mourn the father, and lament the king?
Or, when the hapless BELVIDERA's tale
Of brutal RENAULT turns her husband pale,
Does not the force with which she then exclaims,
Light every eye-ball into instant flames?
Rage with a fire too big to be express'd,
And spread one Etna thro' the bursting breast?
But, tho' unequall'd in those tragic parts,
Which fall with weight, and hang about our hearts,
'Tis not on these she wholly rests her name,
Or builds a title to dramatic fame—
Mark, in the gayer, polish'd scenes of life,
The sprightly mistress, or the high-bred wife,
What wond'rous grace and dignity unite
To fill us still with exquisite delight:
Mark how that nameless elegance and ease,
Can teach e'en MURPHY's ribaldry to please;
With actual life his cold BELINDA warm,
And tell that whining LOVEMORE how to charm—
Peace to thy shade, and may the laurel bloom
With deathless green, O CIBBER, on thy tomb!

Peace,

Peace, wond'rous **OLDFIELD**, ever wait thy shrine,
Thou once chosen priestess of the sacred Nine;
For while this **YATES**, the utmost reach can show
Of comic grace, or soul-distracting woe,
We find no reason for the sorrowing tear,
Which else wou'd fall incessant on your bier.

Curse on that bard's malignity of breast,
How bold soe'er, or exquisitely drest,
Who once thro' **YATES**'s requisites could trace,
Yet find no dawn of meaning in her face—
Oft **CHURCHILL**, often when **BELLARIO**'s fears,
His faith, his wrongs, have plunged us into tears—
Has the sweet anguish of this **YATES**'s sighs
Forced that stern bosom instantly to rise:
Oft as a fine ductility of breast
Some new-born passion on her visage prest,
Taught the soft ball more meltingly to roll,
And drew out every feature into soul;
Then have I seen the censor, who could find
No glance whatever vivified with mind,
Lost in a storm of unaffected woe,
Till pitying nature bid the torrent flow,
Relieved the tortured bosom thro' the eye,
And gave his sentence publicly the lie.—

Yet, high soever as the poet rates
The well-known worth and excellence of **YATES**,
He cannot give perfection to her share,
Nor says she's wholly faultless as a player—
Sometimes her sense too vehemently strong,
By needless force, will deviate into wrong;
And sometimes too, to throw this fault aside,
She blends too little tenderness with pride:
What need **CALISTA**, ent'ring on the stage,
Exclaim, "Be dumb for ever," in a rage?
Her faithful woman gives her woes relief,
And justice calls for temper, tho' for grief—

Again; when **MODELY** stands reveal'd to view,
 And comes all suppliant to a last adieu,
 What need that cold indifference of air,
 That stiff unbending haughtiness of stare?
 'Tis true, the wretch deserves our utmost scorn—
 Yet her resentment is but newly born;
 And we shou'd read distinctly in our eyes,
 That still she loves, how'er she may despise—
 Where women once a passion have profess'd,
 They may resent, but never can detest;
 Nor where the basest fav'rite they discard,
 Conceal all marks of pity and regard—

Thus has the poet on old **DRURY** try'd
 With care to judge, and candour to decide;
 And shou'd the kind indulgence of the times
 Approve thus far his motley string of rhimes,
 His aim he yet more widely may pursue,
 And **BEARD**'s light squadrons in their turn review—
 Thro' all the pomp of coronations pierce,
 And give their best manœuvres in his verse—

Nor shall the rage of any paltry thing,
 Whom his just censure hitherto may sting,
 A moment check the critical design,
 Or blunt the honest sharpness of a line—
 What? In such times of liberty as these,
 When writers think and scribble as they please,
 With boundless licence virulently prate,
 And lash the mightiest pillars of the state;
 When even the throne can boast of no excuse
 From censure, insult, slander, and abuse;
 Nor heaven's dread justice and avenging rod
 Secure the awful attributes of God:
 Say, shall the blushless scandal of a stage
 Affect to bluster, or presume to rage,
 If his poor parts to trial should be brought,
 And candour tell him of an actual fault—

When,

When, O ye soft-soul'd patrons of the scene,
 Who damn my cause as barbarous or mean,
 And think it base or cruel to declare
 A free opinion of some trifling player,
 In what refined and gently-judging age
 Did truth first dream to sanctify the stage,
 And stamp a kind of sacrilegious shame
 On those who sported with an actor's name?
 Say, should those only in the rounds of men
 Escape the well-timed justice of the pen,
 Who toil with ceaseless industry to find
 Some rising blot or folly in mankind?
 To censure's lash are none to be deny'd,
 But those who censure all the world beside?
 And they who live to paint our faults, alone
 To hear no mention ever of their own?
 Sure, if where striking excellence demands
 A generous plaudit from our ready hands,
 'Tis right an actor's character to raise,
 And just to crown him with a liberal praise;
 It can't be wrong, where total want of sense
 Destroys the scene, and fills us with offence,
 The angry head indignantly to move,
 Nor more than justice sharply to reprove.

Here then to reason's equitable laws
 The poet trusts the issue of his cause;
 Nor dreads a harsh or prejudiced decree
 From any bosom sensible or free.—
 Malice, indeed, incessantly may rail,
 And foam envenom'd with a deadlier pale;
 Dulness may also soberly declaim,
 And seem from pure humanity to blame;
 But if the wise pronounce their clear award,
 And give a verdict boldly for the bard,

The shafts of hate he calmly can despise,
 And look on dulness with unkindling eyes:
 For, next the praise he warmly hopes to find
 From every generous and expanded mind,
 'Tis in the foremost of his constant rules,
 To prize the scorn and enmity of fools.

END OF THE FIRST BOOK.

T H E S P I S:

OR, A

CRITICAL EXAMINATION

INTO THE

MERITS of all the Principal PERFORMERS

BELONGING TO

COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE.

THESE

THESE

CRITICAL EXAMINATION

THESE

GOVERNMENT

T H E S P I S.

B O O K II.

FROM the deep-gloom of everlasting night
Where gath'ring shades still thicken on the sight,
And baleful Styx with unrelaxing mud
Sleeps wholly guiltless of a moment's flood:
Deign, gracious DULLNESS! from thy ebon chair
To nod propitious on a Grubstreet prayer:
And if no spark with heaven-struck genius blest,
E'er kindly beams an instant on my breast;
If no one ray of these exalted fires
My torpid bosom genially inspires;
Which with so bold, so masterly a rage
Have flamed thro' JOHNSON's elevated page;
Grant me, kind power, some salutary art,
To check the secret workings of my heart:
That while thus curst to scribble after bread
With public scorn still hissing round my head;
I yet through life contentedly may doze,
And drawl out being on a dead repose;
Unhurt when laughter archly aims her joke
Or stern-brow'd satire marks me for a stroke;
Of feeling rob me, if with-held from fame;
And dead to merit, let me die to shame.

Triumphant dunce, illustrious L———, rise,
And, while whole worlds detest thee and despise;
With rage uncommon cruelly deny
Thy hapless muse ev'n privilege to die;
While THEODOSIUS, basely torn from night,
Reeks, festers, stinks and putrifies to light;

C c c

And

And mad CONSTANTIA damns thy recreant name
 To drive with FLECKNOE down the link of fame,
 Say, with what charm, what magic art thou blest,
 That grief or shame ne'er rankle in thy breast;
 That ev'n mere instinct never points a way
 To fly from man and refuge from the day;
 Ne'er kindly tells thee of some pitying grave
 To snatch the blockhead and to hide the slave?
 Oh! that, like L——, with a blushing face
 I bore the stroke of merited disgrace;
 Like him, with some fine apathy of soul,
 I stood the thunder in its mightiest roll;
 Smil'd while the bolt indignantly was hurl'd,
 Or gaped unconscious on a scorning world!
 Then cou'd I view, with temper in my look,
 The just damnation of a fav'rite book;
 Could see my labours with unaching eye
 Form the grand outwork of a gilet pye;
 Pil'd in nice order for the suburb stalls,
 Or sent in carts to CLEMENTS at St. Paul's—
 Then the sharp censure or the biting jeer
 Had fall'n all blunted on my nerveless ear;
 And leagued perhaps with ***** I might stand
 To save or damn at random through the land;
 Nor wrangle farther at a mutual loss,
 But speed to business, and begin with Ross.

Ross, though of various requisites possess'd
 To grow, to force, to rush upon the breast;
 Though with a person finely form'd to please
 He boasts each charm of elegance and ease;
 And joins a voice as musically clear,
 As ever pour'd perhaps upon the ear,
 Yet oft through monstrous negligence will strike
 His warmest friends with pity or dislike,
 And render doubtful, through a want of care,
 His very title to the name of Player—

Though

Though well apprised this conduct must offend,
He owns his fault, but never strives to mend;
Though the plain use of industry he sees,
He hates a moment's trespass on his ease;
And lets mere chance conduct him every night,
Convinced of wrong, yet negligent of right—
Hence, who that sees him with a lifeless air
In PHOCIAS talk of madness and despair;
Or marks his odious vacancy of eye
Ev'n on the spot where ARIBERT must die;
Could e'er suppose the slabb'rer had an art
At times to cling so closely round the heart;
Could think he play'd HORATIO with a fire
That forced even slander loudly to admire;
Or dream his actual excellence in LEAR
Could dim each eye-ball with the tend'rest tear?

Rouse Ross for shame, nor thus, mispending time
In slothful stillness, sacrifice thy prime;
Let not each stripling, with a club-room name,
Out-soar thee always in the flight of fame;
Nor men endow'd with much inferior parts
Obtain a stronger int'rest in our hearts—
From those with talents utterly ungraced,
Unmark'd by sense, and uninform'd by taste,
The muse no casual excellence expects,
And kindly pities natural defects:
But when she sees capacity and skill,
Beholds the power, but cannot find the will;
She stamps her stigma with the heaviest hand,
Nor ever dreams to mitigate the brand.

Where well-bred ease and sprightliness require
The sparkling force of brilliancy and fire;
Where ARCHER strong, but elegantly warm,
Demands the liveliest happiness of form;
There SMITH with finish'd person and address,
Superior rank must certainly possess,

And ask a just pre-eminence of place,
 While e'er we love vivacity and grace—
 But here, if truth her sentiments may tell,
 The polish'd SMITH should ever think to dwell:
 For where, in grave or sentimental parts,
 He makes a bold attack upon our hearts,
 Quits the light fields of gaiety, and roams
 Where tragic passion vehemently foams;
 Where tyrant RICHARD asks the happiest choice
 Of breast-stamp'd lines, and breast-exploring voice;
 There, though we all immediately behold
 The feeling bosom, and conception bold;
 Still, to his features and his tones unkind,
 Howe'er she blest his judgment and his mind,
 Nature ne'er tells the generous eye to roll,
 Nor warms the sterile muscles into soul;
 Ne'er soothes his harsh monotony of strain,
 Nor breathes a sound unconscious of a pain.

But who comes onward with that cheerful air,
 So void of thought, and destitute of care,
 To grace arch humour's soul-delighting reign
 With every pleasure dancing in his train?
 'Tis SHUTTER! whim's inimitable child!
 Loose, yet delicious; exquisite, though wild;
 Form'd by rich fancy at her luckiest stroke;
 The life of mirth, and quintessence of joke!
 Ah! did the rogue but sensibly restrain
 The wide indulgence of his comic vein;
 Did he from nature never seek to run,
 Nor strike at sense to gratify a pun;
 Did he, adhering to his part alone,
 Ne'er fill the scene with crotchets of his own;
 The harshest censor, ev'n of modern days,
 Would then be wholly boundless in his praise;
 And rose lip'd laugh, unconscious of offence,
 For ever combat on the side of sense.

Where

Where men indeed are destitute of parts,
And want the power to grow upon our hearts;
Where the dull actor, fatally confined,
Can glance no beam of pleasure on the mind;
This monstrous by-play, though a vile abuse,
May plead some distant shadow of excuse,
And think a senseless pleasantry to call
Is better much than no delight at all—
But when in SHUTTER'S admirable face
Such striking powers of comedy we trace;
When the fine humour of his wond'rous tones
Each candid ear so generously owns;
And when he ne'er is happier in our sight
Than where we find him critically right;
Is it not treason at the bar of fame
To stamp base metal with a sterling name;
To trick that plaudit poorly from our hand
Which worth like his for ever can command!

But here the stage may possibly reply
We view this practice with too stern an eye;
And point out various instances where plays
Are clogg'd so much with dullness or delays,
That fav'rite names by every art should strive
To keep the scene judiciously alive;
With some smart stroke the interval beguile,
And warm the audience to a casual smile—
Indeed, if actors never urged a claim
To sport at random with a poet's fame;
Ne'er from his meaning boldly thought to stray,
But paid religious rev'rence to his play;
Excuse like this would never raise a frown,
Nor fail in just importance, with the town:
But when ev'n SHAKESPEAR, mangled to their mind,
No distant gleam of tenderness can find;
When through all ages, and through all degrees,
They change, retrench, and slaughter as they please;

Why

Why are such pieces ever raked to light
As drag, fatigue, and sicken on the sight,
Both sense and nature palpably disgrace,
And call for aid from pertness and grimace?

Where, in some rough yet cultivated mould,
A strong stern face of nature we behold;
Where, like old LEGEND, turbulence of mind
With high-wrought humour happily is join'd;
Where wit gives rudeness ev'n a pleasing guise,
And mirth applauds what virtue would despise,
There DUNSTALL always grows upon our view,
Correctly warm, and vehemently true;
There, with a master's nicety of art,
He blends the jarring compounds of a part;
Is smooth, yet fiery; insolent, yet mean;
Gay, though distress'd; and mad'ning, though serene—
Hence on these casts the poet, as a friend,
Could wish that DUNSTALL wisely would depend:
For when in LETHÉ, with a staggering gait,
He seeks an instant laughter to create;
The part, less suited to that natural course
In which we love his passion and his force,
Neglected flags, nor ever can excite
An equal share of sensible delight—

When easy pertness leads us to admire,
Few can surpass the excellence of DYER;
With nicer art the saucy footman hit,
Or point the smartness of a coxcomb's wit—
Mark, in LISSARDO, with what genuine skill
He twists the gravest muscle to his will;
Bids the loud laugh incessantly take place,
And pours a simper ev'n on envy's face:
In TATTLE too, e're BEARD, perversely blind,
To other hands the character consign'd,
MERCUTIO, CLODY, and such dangerous rounds,
Still within nature's finely judging bounds

He traced the inmost meaning of her laws,
 And shone still crown'd with general applause.
 Yet, while the muse thus equitably showers
 A strong encomium on his comic powers,
 And candour, free from tenderness, conveys,
 This just, this public tribute to his praise;
 Still must the poet, with un pitying phlegm,
 His tragic efforts instantly condemn;
 And wish that ease he ardently approves,
 That taste he values, and that sense he loves,
 To those light scenes would still confine his choice,
 Which ask less force of features and of voice.

When actors once have firmly built a name
 On some bold title to dramatic fame;
 Twined round our fancies, in their hum'rous parts,
 Or wept in anguish deeply through our hearts;
 Nought is so frequent, as a wild desire
 At casts quite diff'rent vainly to aspire,
 Where stubborn nature least inclined to lean
 By instinct shudders at the arduous scene;
 And honest sense, that ever faithful guide,
 Damns the mad purpose, and proclaims it pride:
 Yet still as dangers upon dangers rise
 The glowing prospect fascinates their eyes;
 Proportion'd still to hazards and to fears,
 The embryo Glory ravishes their ears;
 And each believing that his stars have shed
 The wond'rous powers of GARRICK on his head,
 Darts keenly forward with a great design
 In tears or laughter equally to shine;
 Disputes the palm with GARRICK as he plays,
 And scorns a less than universal praise.

But let my words convictively be prest
 On every stage-struck ICARUS's breast,
 Who, never dreading once to be outdone,
 Wings with too bold a pinion on the sun;

And

And risques, in ill-judged characters, a fall
 From some vain flight at excellence in all—
 Down from old THESPIS to the present hour,
 Who, besides ONE with universal power,
 In every walk on every mind could press,
 And soar alike in humour or distress?
 Through the wide field of still-improving time,
 This was a height which ONE alone could climb;
 Olympus high, it ended in the skies,
 And mock'd the myriads lab'ring still to rise—
 Hence should our actors cautiously disclaim
 An eager, restless avarice of fame;
 And, wheresoe'er their talents may excel,
 With moderate honour wisely choose to dwell,
 Rather than blast their honest sprig of bays
 In some mad struggle for a boundless praise.

WOODWARD, a veteran on the stage allow'd
 Has long been highly noticed by the crowd;
 By those nice critics who, so laughter spreads,
 With taste or judgment never plague their heads;
 But tread alike on nature and her laws,
 Without one glance to consequence or cause:
 Yet if some parts, some VERY few, we spare,
 Who will assert that WOODWARD is a player;
 Who, that to candour holds the least pretence,
 Will here defame him with a ray of sense;
 Or boldly say he ever was disgraced
 With one faint glimmering of a casual taste?
 Form'd by his stars at some surprising time
 When thought was guilt, and sentiment was crime,
 He boasts that blest vacuity of mind
 Which stamps a driv'ler of the mightiest kind;
 And blunders still securely into morn,
 Too poor for hatred, and too mean for scorn.
 Endued with talents singular as these,
 Who can expect but what his fools must please;

Or

Or think, where'er the poet in his parts
 From actual life eccentrically starts;
 Hews through some wild yet entertaining plan
 A bold rough face of UNEXISTING man;
 But what an actor of this wond'rous frame
 Will have the million ravish'd with his name;
 Who can imagine but his worth will rise
 When things most charm us, which we most despise;
 When paltry trick and ignorant grimace
 Assume the mask of judgment and of grace;
 And when to sense the less he e'er inclines
 Best suits the bard's irregular designs;
 When praise from martyr'd nature must be wrought,
 And fame built only on the base of fault?
 Hence with delight his BOBADIL we meet,
 Hence find PETRUCHIO a delicious treat,
 And join in MARPLOT's mirth-exciting cause
 With all the warmth of passionate applause.—
 But when we mark, in highly-polish'd scenes,
 No air that pleases, and no mind that means;
 When finish'd FOPPINGTON disgusts the soul
 In some street-bully's clumsiness of roll;
 And soft SIR COURTLY aims his pointless joke
 In one vile round of execrable croak;
 When on such parts he never can dispense
 A look like breeding, or a sound like sense;
 Who but with me must heartily detest
 His dull, cold, dead sterility of breast,
 And wish him still judiciously confined
 To those strange medlies of a poet's mind,
 Which, against reason, constantly delight,
 And shock the judgment while they charm the sight;
 Are fine, though fulsome; masterly, though wrong;
 Rich, though depraved; and impotent, though strong.
 Long on the stage with general rapture heard,
 Who can deny the excellence of BEARD;

Root out from mem'ry those enchanting strains
 Which pour such magic through the tingling veins,
 Lap the whole breast in transport as they float,
 And give us all elysium in a note?
 Yet in the regions of extatic sound
 Though BEARD's chief laurel certainly is found;
 Though, with an actor's nobler flame of pride,
 The finger ne'er is wholly thrown aside,
 Yet there are parts where, fortunately placed,
 Each look is nature, and each action taste;
 Where every eye immediately must find
 A just, a nice acquaintance with the mind;
 And few more clear or rapidly e'er ran
 Through the deep volume of mysterious man.

Mark where that happy BICKERSTAFF has dress'd
 A GILES all rustic with a generous breast;
 Drawn with a master's highly finish'd art,
 A rough coarse mansion round a princely heart;
 There, quite at ease, unmanacled by fears,
 BEARD a true son of comedy appears;
 Hits off the honest and untutor'd youth
 With such just force, such energy of truth,
 That all is mirth and plaudit as he plays,
 And laugh still joins in unison with praise—
 But when, alas! at some unhappy hour
 He idly labours to extend his power;
 When the dull WHITEHEAD, with a mindless leer,
 Through curst MACHEATH has poison'd all his ear;
 There, though each charm of melody is hung
 In rich profusion on his melting tongue;
 Still the cold accent and the lifeless air
 Distress the singer, and degrade the player;
 While sneering wit sarcastically smiles
 And bids him stick judiciously to GILES.

Through the nice graces of a trembling lay,
 A just applause to MATTOCKS we must pay;

Whose tender strain, so delicately clear,
 Steals, ever honied, on the heaviest ear;
 With sweet-toned softness exquisitely warms,
 Fires without force, and without vigour charms.—
 See through his Meadows that engaging ease
 Which gives ev'n silence requisites to please;
 That polish'd something not to be defined
 Which strikes by instant instinct on the mind;
 Glows with resistless fervor through a part,
 And wins at once the judgment and the heart.—
 In AIMWORTH too we often have beheld
 Some arduous scene where MATTOCKS has excell'd,
 Where nervous sense with elegance was fraught,
 And grace strews roses o'er the fields of thought.—
 Yet if to AIMWORTH nicely we attend,
 Parts might be found which MATTOCKS ought to mend;
 Where loud emotion even itself betrays,
 And damps that pity which it means to raise.—
 Say, when sweet PATTY, at her fire's command
 Pours out her thanks on AIMWORTH's generous hand;
 To Heaven lifts up her supplicating eye,
 And fondly labours with too soft a sigh;
 What need has MATTOCKS, with preposterous aim,
 In strong sententious accents to declaim;
 When sense like his must know the scene requires,
 A nice exertion of the tenderest fires;
 Requires the eye all achingly distressed;
 The faltering whisper, and the heaving breast;
 The gentle earthquake of the nerveless knees;
 The touch all trembling, and th' expiring squeeze?
 With life's strict rules for ever in his eyes,
 The careful actor sensibly should rise,
 And full as free from stiffness on the stage,
 As in his social character, engage.—
 In actual life, where, keenly doom'd to smart,
 Some sharp-tooth'd anguish gnaws along the heart,

When sweet-eyed hope gives expectation's cry,
 And warms the bosom with a gleam no more,
 Who, in a proud solemnity of strain,
 Once idly dreams to utter out a pain;
 Or seeks a pompous cadence to express
 The deep corroding language of distress—

CLARKE has a voice, as manly as his form,
 Through rage-struck HOTTSPUR well design'd to storm;
 Yet still too rough, unmusical and coarse;
 It blends few strokes of tenderness with force;
 And seldom pours, thus fatally confined,
 That strong extensive pleasure on the mind,
 Which those with tones more fortunate impress
 Through every round of terror and distress—
 Hence to the graver business of the stage,
 The cautious parent, or the reasoning sage,
 Where the calm eye of sober-judging life
 Demands high vigor, though it flies from strife,
 The honest muse must earnestly advise
 That CLARKE would turn, and quickly turn, his eyes;
 Nor, still unthinking, drudge away his hours
 On parts less fit, less worthy, of his powers.—
 In flimsy CHARLES, or trifling FREEMAN, placed,
 His talents run continually to waste;
 When good SCOTLORD, awful while he fires,
 His deep-toned force, his manliness, requires;
 And just ABUDAH, merciful as great,
 Would find new reverence in exterior weight.

Were sterling sense, or excellence of heart,
 For fame's bright goal in THESPIS bound to start;
 Say, above GIBSON who could think to rise,
 Or urge a nobler title to the prize?
 But fate, perhaps, when GIBSON first possess'd
 The strong conception, and the feeling breast,
 Supposed a voice was quite below his care,
 Or never once design'd him for a player—

Yet

Yet though in parts of energy and fire,
 She ne'er permits him boldly to aspire;
 And though that note's harsh dissonance of jar
 With quick-soul'd sense holds ever-living war;
 Still there are times, when self-created force
 Subdues even nature in her stern-eyed course;
 And GIBSON's mind, too nervous for her laws,
 Appeals to truth, and rises with applause.—
 Behold, in PRIM, what pleasantry we trace
 Through all that sober, sanctify'd grimace;
 Where rebel flesh, with countenance demure,
 Serenely hot, and holily impure,
 Betrays a sly concubinary flame,
 And steals poor spirit into actual shame—
 In OLD RENTS too, where HEARTY, kindly wrong,
 Thinks gathering grief must vanish at a song,
 There GIBSON's face so tritfully is hung,
 And holds such humorous combat with his tongue,
 That ceaseless mirth will laugh herself to tears,
 And quite forget the grating on her ears.

Where plain hot DOWNRIGHT, with too fierce a rage,
 Arraigns the harmless follies of the age;
 Admits no plea whatever for the times,
 But foams at trifling levities as crimes:
 Or where brave KENT, impertinently great,
 Attempts to snatch CORDELIA from her fate,
 And, with a daring rectitude of thought,
 Tells even his furious monarch of a fault;
 There, finely warm, and accurately clear,
 No harsh remark need WALKER ever fear,
 Nor dread the bard's most scrutinizing plan
 While candour guides him with a ray of man—
 O that to well-judged characters, like these,
 Where moderate powers with certainty can please;
 By some true friend, whom flatt'ry never gain'd,
 We once saw WALKER sensibly restrain'd!

For when, with CATO vainly in his view,
A first-rate fame he madly will pursue;
Or think the frigid nicety of care
In heaven-form'd BRUTUS, constitutes a player;
A ripe, red curse, in aggravated flame,
We hurl indignant at that WHITEHEAD's name,
Who sense like WALKER's stupidly betrays
With the vile incense of an ill earn'd praise.

With a blank visage, never yet design'd
To pour a moment's meaning on the mind;
With a broad lip that never could endear
The noblest thought a moment to the ear;
And some expressless oddity of tone,
To sense at once repugnant and unknown;
Mark where the feelings of a manly breast,
With judgment fraught, and delicacy blest,
In spite of every capital defect,
Create both instant friendship and respect,
The critic's rage intuitively lull
And shine with honest eminence in HULL.
Why will not nature with exhaustless power,
On man her blessings plentifully shower;
And, while she boasts a never wasting store,
Allow him tenfold causes to adore?
Then where HULL's feeling bosom we can trace
We too should find an energy of face;
And see a kind occasion to rejoice,
O'er some wide field of soul subduing voice;
Yet HULL should scorn internally to grieve,
Should choak the sigh that wishes but to heave;
For though no bosom forcibly he rends;
No thinking breast he palpably offends;
But feeds the mind with something like delight,
Howe'er he starves the hearing and the sight.

DIBDIN, where rude simplicity can please,
With bashful freedom, and with awkward ease,

In the wild fallies of a stripling clown
Must ever rise distinguish'd on the town,
And laugh's high feast incessantly create,
While honest RALPH has liberty to prate.
But if once idly, in some strange career;
He starts from sense, and scorns his humble sphere;
If e'er that fine rotundity of frame
At higher walks unhappily should aim,
Or the blest stiffness of that downcast head
To parts of grace be fatally misled,
Each conscious breast he certainly must strike
With obvious pain and sensible dislike;
Cease even his friends with pleasure to affect,
And meet with nought but censure or neglect.

SQUIBB—but a pun is positive offence
Through every realm of nicely-judging sense,
Else could the poet jocularly scoff
How aptly this was recently let off;
How it moved nought but scorn's contemptuous wink,
His'd on through being, and expired in stink.

But from the heroes of the glittering scene
The hard to softer characters must lean;
Must now with tender, yet determined air,
Review the various merits of the fair;
Each charmer's talents critically try,
Nor dread the lightnings of the angriest eye.—
Yet, e'er this task he daringly essays,
Kind God of numbers, animate his lays!
Lo, at his side, mild INVOCATION stands,
With melting accents and beseeching hands;
Calls on the hills, the rivers, and the groves,
The magic graces, and the killing loves,
To give that dulcid flimsiness of rhyme
Which forms the test of common-place sublime;
Bids nonsense flow with harmony replete,
Divinely flat, and execrably sweet.—

Do thou then PHOEBUS, with thy gentlest air,
 Mark this dull effort of affected prayer;
 And, since blest custom leads the scribbling throng
 To such pert phrenzies of unmeaning song;
 Since INVOCATION, with delusive ray,
 Was first design'd to sparkle and betray;
 An empty sound for substance to impart,
 And charm the ear, neglectful of the heart;
 Thro' this bald passage graciously disperse
 The tinsell'd glare and foppery of verse;
 That soft-soul'd fools from custom may admire,
 And criticks praise stupidity for fire—
 So may thy altars—But farewell APOLLO—
 The subject now 'tis requisite to follow—
 Sense loudly damns this despicable stuff,
 And fiercely cries, "The bard has slept enough."

GREEN, PITT, and WALKER, never led aside,
 By any erring prevalence of pride,
 To quit plain nature's customary road
 For high-bred parts of elegance and mode,
 A more than midway eminence must claim
 Where'er we reason on dramatic fame—
 GREEN in a prating chambermaid disdains
 To please by toil, or captivate by pains;
 Yet justly bold, and critically pert;
 Her ease and life incessantly divert;
 And while, through bawling TERMAGANT she strides,
 Bid aching laughter tremble for his sides—
 PITT in those fond, intolerable wives,
 Who quite through love embitter all our lives,
 With too much softness poison every breath,
 Through care still murder, and caress to death;
 There PITT, O matchless SYCAMORE! has shined
 Severely soft, and turbulently kind;
 Though rude, yet tender; passionate, though cold;
 A raging turtle, and a doating scold—

In

In casts quite diff'rent, where the sober tongue
 Of moral spleen sententiously is hung;
 Where the pale lily, in its sickliest snows,
 On DEB'RAH's cheek has blasted all the rose;
 Taught the stale virgin's antiquated breast
 To rise at youth, and shudder at a jest;
 There the sublime malignity we trace
 Through WALKER's fine wrought peevishness of face;
 The rankling breast she constantly displays
 Through all her strict solemnity of phrase;
 E'en WHITFIELD's hate might happily beguile,
 And cheat his muscles to a human smile.

— Breathe soft, ye gales; ye waters cease to move;
 Lo, BAKER comes, the softest child of Love;
 Blest with a form all harmony and grace,
 While Heaven's own sweetness opens in her face—
 In the mild round of secondary parts,
 Where placid virtue grows upon our hearts;
 Where calm-soul'd goodness strongly can engage,
 Charm without force, and vanquish without rage,
 There BAKER's talents modestly incline,
 Nor aim in first-rate characters to shine;
 Though, could a bold, an animated round,
 Like sprightly DAPHNE, happily be found,
 In Fame's high roll she instantly would rise,
 And boast a merit conqu'ring as her eyes.

MAHON, though careful, always is alert;
 Free, but not bold; and sprightly, but not pert;
 At honest force we still behold her strive,
 Correctly warm, and cautiously alive;
 And mark some strokes in BRIDGET, which reveal
 A taste to brighten, and a breast to feel.

But let POITIER our notice now engage;
 The liveliest baggage on the modern stage;
 Whom every breast must honestly admire,
 For nervous freedom and for hum'rous fire—

E e e

Where

Where roaring FANNY, satisfied of wrong,
 So finely blubbers in expressive song;
 For parts like this where music scarcely draws
 The languid mark of second-rate applause;
 Where the just actresses nobly must sustain
 The warming scene, and vivify the strain,
 E'er ev'n a bard like BICKERSTAFF can raise
 The rich-earn'd plaudit of a general praise;
 There, unsuspected of a partial breast,
 POITIER's true worth we honestly may rest;
 And ask securely, in this arduous cast,
 By whom she e'er was equall'd or surpass'd?
 Yet though I rate her character so high,
 I see her sometimes with a pitying sigh,
 Where fast from nature fatally she flies,
 And wounds our judgment to attract our eyes—
 Say, when old DORCAS on her crutch appears,
 Bent with a weight of self-acknowledged years,
 With trembling footstep, and with toothless grin,
 With nought of youth but readiness to sin;
 Can we expect such wretchedness would prove
 A tempting round of sprightliness and love?
 Yet mark POITIER, how strangely out of place,
 She limps in jig, and totters in a race;
 Unceasing ambles with the liveliest air,
 Where all is age, infirmity, and care;
 And mark, when being sick'ning o'er the tomb,
 From wrinkling nature ravishes the bloom,
 Where morn's own blush is struggling how to break
 In tenfold crimsons on her roseate cheek!

— But hark what magic glows along the sphere,
 With mad'ning rapture rushes on the ear;
 Melts the whole breast divinely while it storms,
 Pains with delight, and wounds us as it charms?
 Hail, heavenly songstress; matchless PINTO hail,
 And, while the Syrens enviously grow pale;

While

While the bright moon, transported at thy skill,
 Restrains her course, and every star stands still;
 Say, in what blissful reservoirs of sound
 Can strains like thine, O miracle! be found?
 Or say, obedient to high Heaven's decree,
 Has bankrupt nature lavish'd all on thee?
 O had the fates, at that auspicious hour
 Which blest the finger with such wond'rous power,
 Once on the actress tenderly imprest
 A nervous judgment, and a feeling breast;
 How would thy name, down time's admiring tide,
 In conscious triumph ever think to glide;
 How would the Bard with deep-felt rev'rence gaze,
 And ravish'd worlds grow wanton in thy praise!
 But when, alas!—Enchantress swell the strain!
 Nor grant the Muse a moment to complain!
 Left a wild war with Fate she should commence,
 And wish that voice was still exchanged for sense.

Through MACKLIN's form such elegance we trace,
 Each step is breeding, and each action grace;
 Yet, a meek mass of amiable snow,
 She never bids us generously glow;
 Nor, though with sense her periods always roll,
 E'er sends an accent nobly to the soul;
 But freezes still intensely on the mind,
 Politely cold, and languidly refined.—
 'Tis not a breast, with breeding finely fraught,
 Extensive sense, or dignity of thought,
 A striking person, or a polish'd air,
 Which form, O MACKLIN, an accomplish'd player.—
 High though they shine in Nature's scanty store,
 The finish'd actress loudly calls for more;
 Calls for a boundless latitude of voice
 To sooth, to rage, to sorrow, and rejoice;
 Calls for a heart with sympathy all strung,
 An eye all lightning, and a face all tongue—

Nay, though possess'd of requisites like these,
 No actress e'er can exquisitely please,
 If inattentive strangely to her part,
 A wand'ring look betrays a vacant heart;
 Or the gay gewgaws of a box engage
 Where every glance should centre on the stage.
 Oft have I mark'd, and always mark'd with spleen,
 Ev'n fav'rite actors, in the busiest scene,
 Whene'er their round of syllables was closed,
 Assume an air most stupidly composed;
 Gape round the gall'ry with a lifeless eye,
 Tho' rage stood burning with some fierce reply—
 Nay, when the fiery BAJAZET has shed
 Some soul-fetch'd curse upon his conqueror's head;
 And, stung with madness as he met with grace,
 Has scorn'd, reviled, proscribed him to his face;
 Then have I seen a TAMERLANE of wood,
 Who quite unconscious of his phrenzy stood,
 With some lewd Green-Box changed, perhaps, a leer,
 And quite despised his bosom and his ear.

Blest with a person wholly without fault;
 Though polish'd, gay; and natural, though taught;
 See, where that WILFORD elegantly moves,
 Leads up the graces, and commands the loves;
 Bears nobly on for Fame's exalted goal,
 Replete no less with tenderness than soul:
 Nor will she miss, if cautious in her aim,
 A high, an envied, eminence of fame;
 When her mere dawn can happily display
 Such well form'd prospects of a vigorous day—
 But, beauteous WILFORD, listen to the Muse,
 Which here would counsel with the friendliest views;
 Nor let that eye too passionately gaze
 On the bright meteor of a general praise—
 That voice, dear maid, tho' charming to the throng,
 Is soft, not various; musical, not strong;

And though, where life's familiar scenes invite,
 It strikes us still with delicate delight;
 Yet, where the feelings in some trying hour
 Ask a full burst of bosom-piercing power,
 Where with a wildness of exulting tones,
 Her flame CORDELIA passionately owns;
 There, though its sweetness ever must endear,
 It falls too weak, too gently on the ear;
 Sinks, without force the sense enough to fill,
 Like the smooth murmur of some distant rill—

ELLIOT, like WILFORD, with attractive air,
 Soft as polite, and delicate as fair,
 Through the gay circles of the finely bred
 With just applause is ever sure to tread;
 But still like WILFORD, circumscribed in voice,
 Life's easy path should always be her choice;
 For though CALISTA strongly she conceives,
 Glows with true pride, with just resentment heaves,
 Yet in her tones, so fatally confined,
 She never strikes with vigour on the mind;
 But gives the gen'rous an incessant pain
 To see such judgment sacrificed in vain.

So have I seen—but similes are dull,
 And nerveless bosoms only serve to lull;
 Unless from nature evidently caught
 They give fresh richness to a poet's thought;
 Some dark idea to a reader clear,
 And help his fancy while they charm his ear.

On life's rough sea unfortunately tost,
 Her views quite shipwreck'd, and her hopes quite lost,
 See, with a slow and melancholy air,
 Yet tempting still, and lovely in despair,
 Where soft-nerved BELLAMY commands the eye,
 And sadly labours with an actual sigh—
 O that the charmer never had possess'd
 That wide, that boundless, tenderness of breast;

Which,

Which, with a mad benevolence alone,
 Can feel all wants sublimely but its own;
 Ne'er turns from woe the pity-giving ear,
 But still bestows a bounty or a tear:
 Then poor CLEONE, o'er her murder'd child,
 With burning eye-ball ravishingly wild,
 To every mind her anguish cou'd impart,
 And in fine phrenzy look away the heart—
 Then JULIET still by Cynthia's silver rays
 Had drawn a plaudit of the noblest praise;
 And sweet EUDOSIA's self-denying rage
 With grateful thunders deaf'ned all the stage—
 But now, alas! a bosom ne'er at ease
 Can seldom strive with energy to please;
 Nor think of passions justly as it ought,
 When sorrow chiefly gives a birth to thought.

MATTOCKS, through all the Covent-Garden fair,
 Best ends my task, and best demands my care;
 For though no beauties with uncommon grace
 Swell in her form, or brighten in her face,
 Yet her whole frame with sweetness is designed,
 And all her looks are eloquent with mind—
 Say, through the drama's most extensive round,
 What stile, what walk, of acting can be found,
 In which, if MATTOCKS ever thought to play,
 She bore no added character away;
 Ne'er into merit evidently grew,
 Nor warm'd still stronger on the public view?
 Did she, through tempests in their midnight roar,
 A father's footsteps piously explore,
 Through rising horrors, though an outcast, tread,
 To screen, wild LEAR, thy venerable head;
 So just her action and her feeling rose,
 The dullest bosom labour'd with her woes,
 Glow'd with her flame, or trembled with her fear,
 Nor grudged the frequent tribute of a tear—

To

To scenes quite different if the fair retired,
 She still delighted, and we still admired;
 Through home-spun HOYDEN's scarcely human air
 We loved her fine stupidity of stare;
 And felt a pleasure never to be told,
 When vixen NYSA fiercely strove to scold—
 In PATTY too, where, tenderly distressed,
 A hopeless fire consumed away her rest,
 She taught us first, with pity to deplore,
 To weep for woes at which we slept before;
 And raised a sweet-soul'd elegance of pain
 Which amply paid disparity of strain.

Hence, when the Drama widely we survey,
 And various worth come candidly to weigh;
 When the whole stage the mind before us brings,
 And marks out nature thro' her sev'ral springs;
 MATTOCKS must win the COVENT-GARDEN bays
 Who boasts such num'rous titles to our praise;
 For though no thrill like PINTO's she can claim,
 Or plead the wonders of a WILFORD's frame;
 Yet, when the bosom boldly she can seize,
 In deep-struck anguish or enlivening ease;
 Through tragic woe possesses the pitying throng,
 And warmly strike in comedy or song;
 When through the Drama, in its amplest rounds,
 A just, a lasting character she founds,
 'Tis not a warble or a conquering air,
 Which here must teach a critic to compare;
 A casual moment, or a casual night,
 But that which gives most sensible delight—
 Luxurious reas'ners, with a scornful eye,
 This fair award may possibly deny,
 And proudly urge that one ecstatic swell
 Where matchless PINTO highly may excel;
 Or one fine sweep where, doubly bent to charm,
 That angel, WILFORD, shews her heavenly form;

Deserves

Deserves a richer tribute from my lays,
 Than countless worlds of MATROCKS's should raise—
 For me, with palate provident at least,
 I hate to starve whole ages for a feast;
 And think good sense and Burgundy, that stand
 With constant smiles all sparkling at my hand,
 A wiser choice than folly can display,
 Which stoops to nought but fashion and tokay—
 But while the light of character is made
 We now proceed with MATROCKS to the shade—

Of all the gifts an actress e'er possesseth,
 The first, the noblest, is a feeling breast;
 Yet the nice actress, with a cautious pride,
 A gem like this should often seek to hide,
 And wisely fear its value to reduce
 In vain emotion, or in needless use.

With too quick feelings delicately fraught,
 This, gentle MATROCKS, chiefly is thy fault;
 But know, sweet Squanderer! when in soul-less lines
 The face is saddened, or the bosom pines;
 When the false tear is idly prone to start,
 Without one sorrow swelling at the heart,
 It wounds that force an actor should reveal,
 Where Nature calls him piercingly to feel,
 And, like some slave, whose prostituted tongue,
 With oft-found falsehood infamously hung,
 Who, if a truth he haply should disclose
 Of high concern to being or repose,
 Ne'er o'er our scorn a moment can prevail,
 To urge his strong, his imprecated tale:
 So the wild actor, mindless of offence,
 Who still seems tortured on the wheel of sense,
 Who bursts in tears to reach himself a chair,
 And cuts a cabbage with distracted air,
 Flags on the heart when actual passion springs,
 Though truth should twist him round the tenderest strings.—

Here

Here might the Bard his dang'rous subject close,
And leave the reader quietly to doze;
But where his mind some fav'rite point has won,
The tedious scribbler never can have done;
Nor, howe'er needless, tiresome, or absurd,
Throw by the task without *another* word.

Long in these climes, by every breast admired
Which science polish'd, or which genius fired,
The moral stage, with captivating art,
Has charm'd the fancy, to improve the heart;
Through flowery paths taught virtue to invite,
And mark'd her sacred footsteps with delight—
Form'd by its rules, our nobly-minded youth
Grew early fond of sentiment and truth;
And, blest enthusiasts! with the poet's pen,
They gayly laugh'd, or greatly wept to men—
Struck too, while pondering o'er the mimic world,
The wondering villain in the life-stream curdled;
With instant terrors shudder'd for his name,
And, lost to honour, grew quite just through shame—
Hence, when the manners of a rising age
Depend so near, so strongly, on the stage;
When even our virtues from our pleasures shoot,
And life springs up as passion plants the root;
The cautious ruler of a generous scene,
Should mark an actor's talents as they lean;
And every part judiciously decree
From private piques, and partial friendships free,
As ease, or force, to entertain, or move,
Seem chiefly form'd to pleasure, or improve.

When parts of weight at random we see thrown,
They sink an actor's value and their own:
For say, if SHUTER, at whose happy birth
No star once glitter'd but the star of mirth,
In bold MACBETH had daringly essay'd,
And, frantic, clutch'd the visionary blade;

Would all the wond'rous merit we allow,
 When comic laurels thicken round his brow,
 The ill-placed scene from ridicule exempt,
 Or snatch our fav'rite kindly from contempt?

By you, O GARRICK; and by you, O BEARD;
 The Muse then calls with candour to be heard:
 And if fair truth, persuasive while it shines,
 Beams in her sense, or brightens in her lines,
 She here demands, by mighty SHAKESPEARE's hearse,
 A just, a quick, attention to her verse;
 Demands, that genius, never more misplaced,
 May shock our judgment, or disgust our taste;
 But, that each actor, as his stars design'd,
 To sense and nature constantly confined,
 Where'er he rises, only, may be shewn;
 And learn to spare our feelings and his own.
 Then shall the Stage, with nobler uses spread,
 And noon-day lustre brighten round its head;
 Then the gay tale, through fiction never track'd,
 From seeming truth, shall kindle into fact;
 And fancied woes, more achingly imprest,
 With sun-beam swiftness harrow through the breast—

But, if still strangely heedless to correct
 This oft-found, old, yet capital defect,
 Those who should mark the lesson with regard,
 Disdain the counsel, and despise the Bard;
 If palsied age, just tottering o'er the bier,
 In brisk, bold parts is suffered to appear;
 If sprightly mirth its being may forego,
 To sweat at madness, or to strain at woe,
 And melting Pathos, palpably debased,
 In frothy fops or libertines is placed;
 GARRICK himself, though Envy must admit
 He first raised Virtue to the throne of Wit,
 From Genius, wildly straggling into seed,
 First pluck'd each rank inflammatory weed;

And

And where some sentence infamously red,
Shot forth its vile, yet fascinating head,
His gen'rous labour hallowed o'er the ground,
And raised both sense and decency around—
Yet if to errors of this monstrous size,
His wholesome hand unkindly he denies,
No specious plea Resentment will allow,
But wear eternal anger on her brow ;
Since minds like his all accurate and warm,
By more than halves should sensibly reform ;
Remove all fault, impatient of delays,
And only leave Posterity to—praise.

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And only leave Tolly to—
Remove all tithes, & quit-rents of tithes,
By more than halves! should I say more?
Since I have said all, and more, and more,
For wear, & tear, & labor on his brow,
No precious plea, & testament will allow,
His whole life, & his whole life, & his whole life,
Yet it is clear of his monstrous deed,
And raised both hands, & feet, & feet,
His grace, & his grace, & his grace,
Shed forth its light, & its light, & its light,
And where the light, & the light, & the light,

A N

E L E G Y,

TO THE

M E M O R Y

OF THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE

WILLIAM, late EARL of BATH.

**THIS PIECE IS INSCRIBED
TO SUCH MEMBERS OF THE MINORITY,
AS ARE ACTUATED BY A REAL SOLICITUDE
FOR THE WELFARE OF THE PUBLIC;**

BY THEIR MOST OBEDIENT

HUMBLE SERVANT

HUGH KELLY.

WILLIAM, LATE EARL OF BATH.

E L E G Y,
TO THE
M E M O R Y
OF THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE
WILLIAM, late EARL of BATH.

SAY, when the wise, the dignify'd, and high
Submit to fate's inexorable doom,
Shall no kind anguish swell the friendly eye,
Nor drop one pious offering on the tomb?

Ere this some vot'ry of poetic fame
'Twas thought, O BATH! had kindled into fire,
And wreath'd a deathless chaplet for thy name
Around the Muse's consecrated lyre.

Yet this dead silence which the Muse displays
From Friendship's self may possibly arise;
Since all, though bound to wonder and to praise,
Are bound alike to pity and despise.

O that DEATH's dread and everlasting pause,
In black oblivion might enwrap thy name,
So that the loss of honour and applause
Could wash away thy baseness and thy shame!

But truth, alas! will rush beyond the grave,
 And drag the mightiest to the face of morn,
 Dwell on each act that indicates the slave,
 And hang it up to never-ending scorn.

'Tis then, no bawd of overbearing times,
 Howe'er entrench'd in ermine, or in power,
 Can strain her honest dictates into crimes,
 Nor legal ruffian haul her to the Tower;

'Tis then, no dastard verdict she can hear,
 On some tame jury villanously stole,
 Nor dread a sentence fasten'd on their fear,
 Repugnant wholly to their sense and soul.

Had the white angel of the strictly just,
 At one nice period, PULTNEY, interposed,
 And kindly snatched thee headlong into dust,
 How bright a race of glory hadst thou closed!

Then, at thy mention, the big drop would start,
 And teach each nobler sentiment to burn;
 All BRITAIN then had screw'd thee to her heart,
 And pour'd immortal sorrows on thy urn.

The nameless magic on thy voice which hung
 Had then swell'd up our most exalted rhymes,
 And the rich thunders of thy wond'rous tongue
 Roll'd on impetuous to the latest times.

Turn back, O memory! if thou canst, nor gaze
 Where poor ambition's paltry-minded breath
 Could blast the harvest of so bright a praise,
 And chill each ripening dignity to death.

Throw some Olympus, Fancy, on the thought,
 Nor let the bursting sentiment disclose,
 That patriot PULTNEY ever could be bought
 To screen the deadliest of his country's foes.

That

That he, the godlike guardian of the state,
Who still pursued where'er the villain fled,
Could basely stoop and snatch him from his fate
When hung with honest horrors o'er his head.

And stoop—for what?—Perdition catch the found,
And blast it instant, with the worst despair!
A word which truth, in every age, has found
Composed as much of infamy as air.

Search the long list of nobles on record,
Since empire first or dignity began,
And mark how few were honour'd with MY LORD,
Who graced the humbler epithet of MAN.

In nature's earlier and exalted state
On sure foundations all distinction stood;
Whoe'er had worth, of consequence, was great,
And he was self-ennobled, that was—GOOD.

No star then glitter'd on the breast of shame,
No sordid knave was purpled o'er with strings;
'Twas worth that mark'd a subject with a name,
And not the wild capriciousness of kings.

But, when some spoiler, rushing into light,
The bolts of power tyrannically hurl'd,
And claim'd from Heaven hereditary right
To scourge the groaning nations of the world!

When future kings, in one oppressive line,
On every human institute had trod;
Nay, talk'd of rights prescriptively divine,
To burst the dreadest mandates of their God:

Then the mad licence of unbounded rule,
A brand of title to its minions gave,
Stamp'd the *disgrace* of honour on the fool,
The public robber, and the perjured slave.

The blushless villain bore it, from the hour
 He vilely sold his country and his trust;
 The hackney'd strumpet had it for her dower,
 And reek'd a Duchess from the bed of lust.

Yet, for this breath of dignify'd disgrace,
 Did PULTNEY meanly pander to a throne;
 Nay, though it stunk upon a WALPOLE's race,
 Before it rankly fester'd on his own.

Here see, ye meteors of a wond'ring state
 Nor throw the moral sentiment aside,
 How low ambition can reduce the great,
 And how the wisest are debased by pride!

O did a puff of title-giving wind
 Point out to man a more exalted goal,
 Enlarge the smallest faculty of mind,
 Or raise the simplest excellence of soul:

Did the loud herald's widely-swelling strain,
 The pompous coat, or coronetted crest,
 Talk down the madd'ning anguish of a pain,
 Or hush a rising sorrow in the breast:

Could this ennobling quality of kings
 Eternal rounds of happiness bestow;
 Pluck out from guilt its never-dying stings,
 And purge the midnight murderer to snow:

Then, e'en the basest, possibly, might rise,
 The boast and wonder of applauding times;
 And Heaven, which saw the greatness of the prize,
 Look down, perhaps, in mercy on his crimes.

But when we see, in pondering on the great,
 The bloating glories of a monarch's breath
 Can soothe no adverse circumstance of fate,
 Nor kindly steal a manacle on death,

When

When the long scene of tinsel has been closed,
Which through unnumber'd ancestries has ran;
And left the mightiest of the high exposed
To all the various miseries of man:

When we behold him languidly oppress'd,
On death's pale couch, all ghastly and declined;
Or dragg'd before the godhead of his breast,
And damn'd to all the hells within his mind:

'Tis then th' intrinsic emptiness of fame,
In all its pomp of nothingness, shall rise;
Teach wisdom's cheek to redden at a name,
And virtue's brow to furrow and despise.

Titles!—what are ye, on your noblest strings,
Howe'er the weak or worthless may revere?
Alas! the proudest epithet of kings
Ne'er struck, like BARNARD, on a British ear!

Where inbred honour happily is given,
In vain the stream of dignity is shed;
And sure 'tis treason at the bar of Heaven
To pour a glory on a rascal's head.

See, low in earth, where PULTNEY's title lies,
That glittering gewgaw of a prince's nod:
While BARNARD holds a patent from the skies,
And soars a deathless nobleman with God!

Here thrones, enwrap'd in silence and amaze,
Shall shrink to look so wonderfully high;
And fame herself be furnish'd with a gaze
To crack the straining fibres of her eye.

Hear, ye mad factions of the present race,
Who wildly rage with discord's dangerous brand,
And call a shameless enmity for place
A generous struggle for your native land!

But

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But

But chiefly hear, ye celebrated few,
 Who *nobly* sicken at a country's groans,
 And, acting *always* from the whitest view,
 Have fought from honest principle alone!

Is there, who, glowing with a godlike pride,
 For BARNARD's crown would emulously start,
 And spurn the farce of dignity aside
 To raise an empire on a nation's heart?

Let star-eyed justice ever be his rule,
 Which all of *self* indignantly disowns;
 And scorns as much to be a party's tool
 As crouch the servile sycophant of thrones.

'Tis not a blind ungovernable rage
 At every act which ministers avow,
 That justly marks the saviour of an age,
 Or binds a laurel round the patriot brow.

The keenest scourge that ever smote these climes,
 At some nice crisis for their welfare stood:
 And oft the mere necessity of times
 Has scared the ruthless tyrant into good—

Though hapless AFRIC at her fires exclaims,
 While mid-day suns their blazing circuit hold;
 Yet the same orb that lights her into flames,
 Matures the latent mineral to gold.

The parching natives of the baleful shore
 At eve's glad summons dart themselves away,
 And grasp, transported, at the dazzling ore,
 Though ripen'd solely by the burning day:

Just so the patriot, of an honest zeal,
 Swift as the lightning vehemently wings,
 And grasps each measure for the public weal,
 Without once thinking from what source it springs.

But

But why of patriots idly do I rave?

My inmost soul the modern herd disdains,
Where every boaster has his turn of slave,
And vilely bawds to shackle us in chains.

Loud as the leaders of our patriot band
The public shout of liberty may claim,
Yet base proscription blackens every hand,
And stabs a kingdom, to preserve the GAME.

What boots the casual vehemence of soul,
That swells the freeborn whirlwind to the skies,
Rings against GENERAL WARRANTS at the pole,
And chills the stars with curses at EXCISE:

If, while the cause of liberty they plead
Our very patriots infamously fall,
And stoop themselves to consecrate a deed
Which drags the widest ruin on us all?

What are the new-born sufferings of the hour
If justice takes the balance in her hand,
To what the mean barbarity of power
In brutal GAME-ACTS scatters round the land?

Srip'd of his rights, the farmer seeks the shade,
Where silence kindly waits upon despair;
And mourns his sacred liberties betray'd,
That pamper'd wealth may trifle with a hare.

To grief and rage alternately he yields,
Nor sheds one grateful smile upon the morn;
A general ravage wastes his little fields,
And speaks some purse-proud ruffian of the horn:

Perhaps, a bleeding monument he stands,
To strike his neighb'ring villagers with awe;
And smarts, all scourged by LEGISLATIVE hands,
Who greatly club to ROB him of the LAW—

But:

But at our MINORS let him not exclaim,
 Nor turn to heaven his melancholy eyes;
 A patriot, sure, may murder for the GAME
 Who damns a GENERAL WARRANT and EXCISE!

Weep not, ye RUSSIAN vassals! at your state,
 Nor think your lot is singularly hard;
 Though mark'd, through some severity of fate,
 A kind of pack-horse to your casual lord:

What, though beneath the everlasting breeze,
 With scarce a pittance of the meanest bread,
 Through life's long round you miserably freeze,
 And none e'er find a shelter, but the dead:

Yet fate, in all its bitterness, was kind,
 And shew'd some marks of tenderness and care;
 Bestow'd a bless'd unthinkingness of mind,
 And gave a happy promptitude to bear.

You can sit naked in the beating rain,
 E'en while the north wind violently roars;
 And seem regardless while the bellowing main
 In horror dashes round your dreary shores:

You, at a nod, can prostitute a wife,
 Nor doubt the killing mandate to be just;
 Can calmly kneel, and sacrifice a life,
 To lick the foot that tramples you in dust.—

But BRITONS, form'd of very different mould,
 At every touch intuitively smart;
 And, greatly just, as generously bold,
 The smallest dagger pierces to the heart.

How then must BRITONS murmur at their fate,
 If candid sense decides upon the cause;
 When even the mere AMUSEMENTS of the great
 Can stab the VITAL ESSENCE of our LAWS?

When ev'n the hand of LEGISLATIVE rule,
Which once stood guardian at distress's door,
Extends the power of every WEALTHY fool,
And nobly makes it GUILTY to be poor!

O for some curse, executive as dread!
Hot, hissing instant, from the starry throne,
To strike the villain's execrable head,
That first destroy'd our TITLE to our OWN!

Will no kind thunder pity the distress'd,
And, big with judgment, mercifully roll,
To crush his *more* than PROSTITUTED breast,
To blast—his actual SODOMY of soul!

Ye patriot names!—But, why should I persist—
'Tis vain with pride or avarice to contend—
Besides, few BARNARDS beam upon the list,
And, all too like, may PULTNEY in the end.

O PULTNEY!—But comparison is pain,
Where BARNARD's name we mention as divine,
And fancy only aggravates the stain
Which BATH has thrown eternally on thine.

The praise of worlds, in echo to the spheres,
The patriot's brightest and his best reward;
And all that once could ravish on our ears
Is now absorb'd in infamy and LORD.

Yet let us teach the ages still unborn
With some indulgence kindly to decide,
And think that fate has cast thee out to scorn
To lash each swelling arrogance of pride:

Let us suppose thee graciously design'd
To give one moral lesson to the ball,
And teach the proudest of the human kind
How soon the wisest and the mightiest fall.

Then

Then on the wing of widely spreading fame
Some tender mark of pity may be thrown;
And those who blush the deepest at thy name,
Turn back, dismay'd, and tremble for their own.

FUGITIVE

FUGITIVE PIECES.

PROLOGUE to the MAN OF REASON.

SPOKEN BY MR. LEWIS.

HARD is his task, in this inconstant age,
Who writes for Comic laurels from the stage;
While public taste, still changing like our dress,
Leaves no one sure criterion of success—
The parish 'prentice, when seven years are past,
Can make a shoe with certainty at last;
And work securely without dread or blame,
Because your foot must always be the same—
Not so the bard—Though serving twenty years,
He's still distracted by a thousand fears,
And never sure your humour to discern,
Toils on through life, and has his trade to learn—
To-day all charm'd with sentiment wrought high,
You think it mighty comical to cry—
"Lord, Colonel Brag (drawls Lady Jane Spadille)
"I'm almost dead—Indeed! O, monstrous ill!
"I saw the fav'rite comedy last night—
"Tis a true comedy—It kill'd me quite—
"So chaste!—so polish'd!—so extremely deep—
"I wept a sea—and then fell fast asleep."—

Thrust out of doors, poor Sentiment, to-morrow,
Has ample cause for all her sobs and sorrow;
"Damn her (cries Sulky), splenetic and rough,
"The comic muse can never laugh enough;
"And where dull poets with their moral phlegm
"Would make her feel—Why, Zounds! I'd feel for them."—

H h h

"You

" You are right, my life (says honest Thady Farrol),
 " For he and I won'd have a serious quarrel,
 " Who'd take (thus turning all my laughs to cries,)
 " A base advantage of my face and eyes."

The sober cit, who leads a weary life
 Between high taxes and a scolding wife,
 Thinks there's no need for misery to roam;
 If pain be pleasure, he may stay at home:
 And even the gods now fond of something funny,
 Desire—he! he! a chuckle for their money—
 What say you, Tom?—what says my pretty Nancy?
 You love to laugh a little bit, I fancy—
 And there's Jack Tar—he that sits yonder drinking,
 Will have his joke altho' his ship is finking.

To hit your humour, gentlefolks, to-night,
 We're grave and gay—pray Heaven we may be right!
 For should our Bard in dismal overflow,
 And turn he! he! to tragedy ho! ho!
 You'll quickly crack his melancholy skull,
 Though wisely hard, and classically dull—
 Or should he (thinking that last winter's passion,
 For downright laughing still exists in fashion)
 To raise a loud, an universal roar,
 Take freedoms frequent with the wits of yore;
 Your anger then from different springs may flow,
 And maul the fool, as farcical, or low.

Yonder he stews—Ay, hide your recreant head—
 Between ourselves [*to the Pit*] there's room enough for dread—
 But I've done tolling his dramatic knell,
 So wish it bed-time, and that all were well.

EPILOGUE to the MAN OF REASON.

SPOKEN BY MRS. BULKELEY.

TOO much, ye fair, our sex has been confest
 The scribbler's pastime, and the coxcomb's jest;
 As if no flame of sentiment refined
 Could ever blaze within the female mind.—
 Yet, in this circle, is there any son
 Who'd save a father by the risques I run?
 And fly the maid he fondly may adore,
 To wed some red faced virgin of threescore?

Since Greece victorious set old Troy on fire,
 We've found but one Eneas to admire,
 And he, perhaps, had never deign'd to pack
 His poor papa upon his pious back,
 Unless it served him with a decent blind,
 To leave a wife he sicken'd at, behind.

Among the men it seems a constant rule,
 To treat each woman as a pretty fool;
 When maids they scorn us, and when wives they flout us,
 Yet, wretches, say, what wou'd you be without us?
 Fresh from the college comes the sage of reading
 Not to acquire—for he despises breeding—
 Proud of his books, his Latin and his Greek,
 He scarcely stoops to hear a lady speak;
 And thinks her utmost value, when you win her,
 Is to scold servants—pray—and order dinner—
 At first he's distant—now he's something free—
 He deigns to smile—he's social company—
 He loves at last—nay kneels to give a fan,
 And the learn'd bear is polish'd into man—
 Our chat, indeed, is trifling oft perhaps,
 We talk of ribbands, laces, and of caps:
 But is the men's confined to wiser bounds,
 Do they ne'er talk of horses, nor of hounds?

Of ten to one—done first, my Lord—and done—
 Whose colt was that?—mine, damn she—I have won—
 Where stands the bottle—push it round my boys—
 Why no, I won't—I don't approve this noise—
 You're drunk, Sir John—I am?—Draw—no pretences—
 I'll have your life, to prove I'm in my senses.

When women war, they only fight with tongues,
 And she must conquer, who's best off in lungs;
 We part incensed, but quickly meet again,
 To murder friends belongs alone to men—
 Our sex no more then, mighty Sirs, despise,
 But learn to view us with respectful eyes;
 We're your superiors in a great degree,
 And he who doubts, may be convinced by me.

P R O L O G U E

Spoken at Drury-Lane, for the Benefit of the INFANT POOR.

THOUGH famed in arms, in commerce though renown'd,
 Though great in arts, with liberty though crown'd,
 Though where'er her mighty flag's unfurl'd
 Britannia rises empress of the world,
 Still when array'd in meek-eyed Pity's robe
 She looks more great than when she rules the globe,
 And all the glories which her crowns can dart,
 Are poor, if balanced with her feeling heart—
 When late wild war provoked her Lions' roar,
 And spread her victories from shore to shore,
 How did your bosoms exquisitely glow,
 To mark her godlike conduct to the foe?
 The hostile bands in triumph as she led,
 She warm'd with rayment, and she cheer'd with bread:
 That needful succour their own state denied
 Her gracious hand exultingly supplied;
 And snatching every captive from the grave,
 Proved it much less to conquer, than to save—

While

While this blest story melts along your ear,
 What native woe can ever want a tear?
 At British pangs a British heart must sigh,
 When foreign griefs can deluge every eye;
 When even we weep for enemies o'erthrown,
 And sooth'd the breast that arm'd against our own:
 To-night we see you, in support of those
 Too young to speak, though not to feel their woes;
 The humble, helpless family of pain,
 Without your favour, brought to light in vain;
 Nay, doom'd to misery e'er they saw the morn,
 And here, unfriended, wretched to be born.
 From this hour's bounty many a hapless fire,
 Who fought your battles with heroic fire,
 His drooping innocent restored shall view,
 And be repaid the blood he shed for you.
 How many a mother too, whose soul-fetch'd cries
 Had else torn wildly through the echoing skies,
 From madness rescued, while her life endures,
 Shall beg down blessings upon you and yours:
 Nay, more exalted objects strike the sight
 Through the kind vists of this generous night;
 Your grateful country in your virtue draws
 New swords to guard her liberty, her laws,
 And, with delight unspeakable, must see,
 That even your tears are arms to keep you free.

EPILOGUE,

*Intended to have been spoken by Mr. MOODY, at Drury-Lane Theatre,
 in the Character of Sir CALLAGHAN O'BALLAGHAN, in Macklin's
 Farce of LOVE-A-LA-MODE.*

TOO dully just to literary rules,
 Our bards conduct their pieces by the schools;
 Warm, without fire, the motley scenes appear,
 Just spun to drawl or sleep upon the ear:

Too nicely wrote from precept to depart,
 They please the fancy but neglect the heart.
Hibernia too, in this politer age,
 Has long been only laugh'd at on the stage;
 Her harmless follies have been painted forth,
 Without the smallest mention of her worth;
 And every genius would his wit employ,
 To joke with *Paddy*, or to banter *Joy*;
 Her very accent swell'd the comic song,
 And every phrase was nationally wrong,
 As if *Britannia* could herself conceal,
 Her thoughtless slips of *winegar* and *weal*.
 For *breakfasts* had ne'er prepared the *toastis*,
 Or bruised her *these here fistis* with the *postis*.

Ye sons of Ireland, wheresoe'er ye sit,
 For once take off the manacles from wit;
 And let these Lords of beef and pudding know,
 That merit springs in *every* soil below.
 Some native spark of heavenly fire confest,
 Glows to divine within the *Indian's* breast,
 Swells unconfined from Briton to the Pole,
 Expands, exalts, and dignifies the soul;
 While *every* clime, by subtlety's trepannings,
 Has *Bottle-Conjurers* and *Betty Cannings*;
 Peculiar follies mark'd on every coast,
 A *human Rabbit* or a *Cock-Lane Ghost*.
 Yet *others* errors move their mirth alone,
 Too blindly dull, or partial to their own.
 Opinion lifts self-consciousness to pride,
 And shews *their* actions on the fairest side;
 Or else too vain from habit to descend,
 They see their faults, but never strive to mend.

For once here *Irish* excellence display'd is,
 That they can *love*—they leave it to the ladies;
 That they can *fight*, each honest Briton knows,
 And bravely too—they leave it to their foes.

Fair *Science* long has led them to explore,
 The deep researches of her mystic store.
 Their *Genius* too, impartial truth declares,
 If BACON's yours, an USHER has been theirs;
 And SWIFT or STEELE the sacred beam secures,
 Though deathless POPE and ADDISON were yours.
 Then, nobly just, O ratify their claim,
 The equal heirs of liberty and fame:
 Their warmest hopes no higher can ascend,
 Than calling *Britain*—Sister—Guardian—Friend.
 By your example generously fired,
 They rise respected, and they live admired.
 This glorious isle with gratitude they view,
 And soar to *virtue*—for they copy you.
 By you inspired, to *liberty* they sing,
 And love the name of BRITON—like their KING.
 Then scorn each mean or despicable art,
 That would deprive a SISTER of your heart;
 The sacred paths of *amity* pursue,
 And *smile* on THEM, who die with *pride* for YOU.

ADDRESS to his MAJESTY,

On the Birth of the PRINCE of WALES.

NO servile muse, whom custom meanly brings
 To fall quite prostrate at the feet of kings;
 No venal bard, affectedly on fire,
 Presumes to strike the consecrated lyre,
 Or breathe an accent seemingly sincere,
 To wound the niceness of his sovereign's ear:
 He shuns a path the multitude have trod,
 Nor swells a monarch higher than a God.
 An ENGLISH prince would scorn the fulsome lays,
 Would spurn such bursts of nothing-meaning praise;
 Behold the poet with indignant eyes,
 Nor bear an offering which he must despise:

Reproving worlds would contradict his pen,
And tell that GEORGE was but the best of men.

How rich the feelings nature has impress!
How strong the rapture of a parent's breast!
Unknown sensations tenderly impart
An aching source of transport to the heart;
In tides tumultuous exquisitely roll,
Flow through the breast, and swell upon the soul;
Give kindred minds a prospect of above,
And add new sharpness to the edge of love.
The father's bliss exalts the soft desire,
And glows ecstatic on the lover's fire.
Hope drest in smiles all ravishing appears,
Grows with the child, and ripens with his years;
The eye parental gladdens at the sight,
Darts inexpressive glances of delight.
Enraptured sees expectancy take place,
And lives for endless ages in its race.
But is it, Sire, in language, to reveal
The nameless pleasures which that breast must feel,
While nations throng all grateful round the throne,
And mix their warmest wishes with your own,
Behold the pledge which every hope secures,
And found their utmost happiness in yours?

Hear, source of light! thou ever-living power,
Imploring kingdoms on so white an hour;
From heaven's high arch, enthroned in goodness, smile,
And mark the future guardian of our isle;
Raise up some genius to direct his youth,
And form his footsteps in the paths of truth,
Teach his expanding bosom how to beat
With all the prince's and the patriot's heat;
And give his breast an emulative fire
To beam with all the glories of his sire.

Long has each poet, with peculiar care,
Wrought deathless laurels for a monarch's heir;

Prophetic

Prophetic steer'd the royal infant's name
Down time's smooth current to eternal fame;
And stripp'd each honour from the mighty dead,
To weave immortal fillets for his head;
Back from their spheres the planets have been hurl'd,
To mark his entrance on a wondering world;
Descending gods were happy when he smiled,
And throng'd with pride to sugar-sop the child.

For once let truth with ornament dispense,
And rapture hold some little view of sense,
Nor still exempt the dignified and great
From human errors, or the turns of fate. —
Yet, sacred Sir, whene'er we lift our eyes,
And see the father soaring to the skies;
Delighted dwell upon a BRITON'S name,
And scorn one glimmer of dishonest fame;
Behold him open, candid, and sincere,
And fearing nothing but the sense of fear,
Politely noble, delicately blend
The awful sovereign with the easy friend;
More famed for worth, than dignified by blood,
And not so great as eminently good;
Doubt flies, all reddening with a conscious shame,
Nor fears a moment for the infant's name:
An honest transport gladdens in her place,
Dwells on his fire, and fastens on his race:
With such a bright example, see him rise
The pride and blessing of a people's eyes;
Form'd with each grace for glory or desire,
His mother's softness, and his father's fire:
Like them reflect no lustre but his own,
Nor draw one borrowed honour from a throne;
But soar superior to the poet's art,
And owe his praises only to his heart.

FUGITIVE PIECES.

ODE to ADVERSITY.

IF on this roof high Heaven should send
 Thy hand, corrective fair,
 Submissive teach my soul to bend,
 But keep her from despair.

Fate's awful word must sure be just,
 Then let me kiss the rod;
 Nor, worn with woe, at all distrust
 The goodness of my God.

The hand who form'd my inmost thoughts
 Must needs be great and wise;
 And he who best perceives my faults,
 The fittest to chastise.

Then, till life's latest sands are run,
 O teach me, Power divine!
 To cry, "My God, thy will be done,
 "Whate'er becomes of mine!"

ODE to INCLINATION.

WHERE'ER thy impulse, Goddess, beams,
 In smiles of transport drest,
 O guard us from those dread extremes
 Which tear the human breast!

From error still to mark our way,
 O point where wisdom runs,
 White as the moon's meridian ray,
 Yet vigorous as the sun's!

Her cautious torch shall safely lead
 Where young Desire should tend,
 And look with scorn on every deed,
 But what she can defend.

Thus

Thus striking vice and folly dumb,
 As reason guides our youth,
 Thy voice, O Goddess, shall become
 The sacred voice of truth.

HYMN *to the* EVENING.

E'ER yet the sun's declining ray
 Has left yon distant sky,
 And e'er the parting streak of day
 Has shut upon the eye;

Come, modest Evening, kindly spread
 Thy dusk-enslaved vest,
 And teach reflective thought to spread
 Devotion on the breast.

O lift the mind to bless the power,
 Whose mercy still shall last!
 And bid him seize the present hour,
 Whose madness lost the past.
 Instructive, tell the pomp of state,
 The pride of mighty blood,
 That none are ever truly great,
 That are not truly good.

To all one admonition give,
 Unfearful of reply,
 That he alone deserves to live,
 Who best prepares to die.

THEODOSIA *to* CORNELIA.

An Epistle from the Country.

TO madness tortured, to distraction drove,
 'Twixt truth and honour, tenderness and love
 Blest with the youth my reason must admire,
 Yet doom'd to languish in a lawless fire;

That faithful breast, my dear Cornelia, lend,
 And sooth the sorrows of a wretched friend.
 Vesuvius-like the struggling flame will rise,
 Burst from my heart, and lighten from my eyes;
 This bleeding bosom-cruelly will tear,
 And give a birth to anguish and despair.
 Yet, my Cornelia, how shall I disclose
 The secret cause or greatness of my woes?
 Some happy language teach me how to frame,
 To speak my sufferings, yet to hide my shame;
 To paint each sharp vicissitude of thought,
 Yet screen my weakness, and conceal my fault.—
 Couldst thou suppose this breast would ever feel
 A wish, a thought, it shudder'd to reveal,
 Or hoard a secret for Cornelia's ear,
 Which Heaven must frown on, and condemn to hear?—
 Thou canst not fancy what I must endure,
 Beyond the reach of comfort and of cure.

Thou know'st, Cornelia, that a fire's command
 To Wellworth's virtues gave my plighted hand:
 Too young to feel, too negligent to prove,
 The nameless raptures of a mutual love;
 No equal fondness exquisitely stole,
 Beat in my pulse, or languish'd in my soul;
 My bosom felt no delicate extreme,
 Nor glow'd with ought but friendship and esteem.—
 Yet hadst thou seen what ways he would employ
 To light each new-born moment up to joy;
 To raise a transport that confess'd the wife,
 And wake some tender sentiment to life;
 Hadst thou but seen how fondly he would stand,
 Gaze on my eyes, and fasten on my hand,
 And use each soft insinuating art
 To catch the thought, and steal upon the heart;
 Thou wouldst suppose that nature had impress'd
 No sense, no gleam of feeling on my breast;

But left one dead vacuity of mind,
 Alike ungrateful, and alike unkind.
 Just to his worth, though lifeless to his flame,
 With pride I heard, and dwelt upon his name ;
 Essay'd each art with diligence to please,
 To soothe his sadness, and promote his ease ;
 Try'd every means a passion to improve,
 And dress out duty in the smiles of love.

Nine little months thus happily did run,
 When Heaven was pleas'd to bless us with a son ;
 The loveliest babe, the most engaging child,
 So softly sweet, and innocently mild !
 O say, what language nature can employ,
 To speak the fulness of a mother's joy !
 What sounds contrive, with feeling to impart
 The tide of bliss which flows about her heart !
 My dear Cornelia will, some moment, prove
 The wonderous fondness of a mother's love ;
 Will find new springs of nameless transport rise,
 Dart through her soul, and sparkle through her eyes,
 Hug the resistless blessing to her breast,
 And feel a rapture not to be suppress'd.—

But now, Cornelia, tenderly dispose
 A pitying ear to listen to my woes ;
 Each softer beam let sympathy improve,
 And sooth the griefs it never can remove.
 The gift of Heaven, in this endearing boy,
 Taught Wellworth's bosom an ecstatic joy,
 A distant view of happiness above,
 And, O ! increased, if possible, his love :
 From the sweet pledge he seldom would depart,
 But strain it closely to his swelling heart ;
 Then kiss my hand amidst ten thousand sighs,
 And gaze, good God ! with what enraptured eyes !
 Till down his cheek the lab'ring transport stole,
 And brought some respite to the struggling soul.—

Struck.

Struck with a sensibility so true,
 I kept my husband ever in my view;
 Strove each return of fondness to impart,
 And teach some tender beatings to my heart;
 Assumed the utmost pleasure at his sight,
 And seem'd to vie in fondness and delight.

Such was my lot, which fate could scarcely mend,
 When Beaufort made a visit to his friend;
 Him Heaven to Wellworth constantly had join'd
 In one close tie, and unity of mind;
 From youth one frame of sentiment they bred,
 Together travell'd, and together read:
 One corresponding parity of thought,
 From merit rising, and from nature wrought,
 Grew up so strong, they scarcely breathed apart,
 Or felt an impulse of a different heart.
 Yet Beaufort's presence from his Wellworth's bride,
 A drooping parent fatally denied,
 Nor had I seen him, till my husband's tongue
 Had drawn him lovely, excellent, and young,
 The glowing tints so strongly did he raise,
 My heart was quite enchanted with his praise.
 Well-pleased I listen'd where I wish'd to hear,
 And found his name new music to my ear;
 Till my whole soul some strange emotion felt,
 With fears would flutter, or with softness melt.
 O may the hour, in which I first became
 Warm'd with his praise, or heated with his name,
 From time's white wing indignantly be torn,
 And hide a pang too bitter to be born!—

He came, Cornelia, came with such a grace,
 Loves in his eyes, and rapture in his face!
 O hadst thou seen a form without a fault!
 Framed to the utmost nicety of thought;
 A cheek, though manly, delicately fair,
 Or view'd the winning softness of his air;

Hadst

Hadst thou beheld—But why do I impart
This guilty weakness of a bleeding heart?
Why do I seem so tenderly to trace
The blameless person and the faultless face?
Or madly paint the object of a flame,
Where words are guilt, and sentiment is shame?
What is't to me, if every love should seek
Darts from his eyes, or roses from his cheek?
To praise his form a moment can she stand,
Whose bridal ring yet blushes on her hand.
What is his air, his person, or his life,
To modest virtue, or to Wellworth's wife?
Some beam, kind Heaven, all graciously disclose,
And speak this aching bosom to repose;
Hence let each weaker sentiment be drove
That fans the flame of ill-directed love.
Come, virtue, come, all rigorously drest,
And tear this fatal image from my breast;
No fainter trace let mem'ry hold behind,
To stain the native whiteness of my mind;
But teach that youth the salutary art,
Who gain'd my hand, to triumph in my heart.—
Well nigh distracted in this hapless fire,
Torn with regret, yet tortured with desire,
In the wild tempest of the passions tost,
My peace is shipwreck'd, and my hope is lost;
My tedious day is past with downcast eyes,
My sleepless nights in unavailing sighs.
Pent in the confines of a darken'd room,
I weep whole hours, and feast upon my gloom;
There to high Heaven and to my child disclose,
The wide extent and fulness of my woes.
Still as I sigh, or as my tears are shed,
The little infant turns his lovely head,
Clings to my breast, instinctively, to share
His mother's griefs, and soften her despair;

As if he strove my anguish to relieve,
 And bear his part of sorrows when I grieve.
 Think in such moments what a heart has known,
 Not quite transform'd or flinted into stone.
 The dear engager, in my arms reclined,
 Calls all his father's merit to my mind;
 Brings back the best of husbands to my view,
 So kindly fond, and generously true,
 That keen reproach indignantly will dart,
 Blush on my cheek, and rankle at my heart;
 Reason, all perfect, resolutely reigns,
 And life's warm blood runs backward in my veins.
 Truth points to virtue's never fully'd goal,
 And scorns this narrow littleness of soul,
 That still must love the murderer of my rest,
 And cannot place a husband in my breast.
 So great a change it cannot be believed,
 But Wellworth long has pitied and perceived.
 O my Cornelia, often has his sighs
 Drawn tears of warm contrition from my eyes:
 Still as he seem'd good-naturedly to mourn,
 How has my soul in agonies been torn?
 Still as he tried my sorrows to remove,
 To what excess of anguish was I drove?
 Had instant death my trembling steps pursued,
 And earth wide oped to snatch me as he view'd;
 Had Heaven so will'd that nature must have shed
 Unheard-of woes on this devoted head,
 The wreck of worlds had ravish'd on my ears,
 And death seem'd much less dreadful than his tears.
 Think, to a mind not totally depraved,
 Not quite absorb'd, nor viciously enslaved,
 How piercing such a circumstance must prove;
 Why cannot reason teach us where to love?
 Snatch up at once some heaven-directed fire,
 And kindle honest duty to desire.—

But

But if this portrait gives such great alarms,
 Think, O Cornelia, clasp'd within his arms,
 All fancy'd joy, and seeming to be blest,
 Yet find another master of your breast,
 With warmth affected, urge some lifeless kiss,
 Put on desire, and counterfeit in bliss;
 An equal rapture *studiously* impart,
 With other objects glowing in your heart—
 Good Heaven! this moment mercifully seize,
 Nor grant me life on any terms like these!
 This instant drive that Beaufort from my thought,
 And let me only worship where I ought.

Yes, my Cornelia, though it be confess'd
 That Beaufort reigns too strongly in my breast;
 Though 'tis a truth I ever shall deplore,
 That none could ever touch my heart before;
 Still have I kept my weakness unexposed,
 Nor once the smallest circumstance disclosed.
 No stealing fondness from a straining eye,
 No faltering accent, or expressive sigh;
 No one unguarded article has shown
 A tale too fatal ever to be known.
 No, my Cornelia, that deserving youth,
 Who claims my vows, shall never blame my truth.
 Nay, ev'n this hapless passion all my life,
 Shall urge each cheerful duty of a wife;
 Increase each with his pleasures to improve,
 And give in friendship what it takes in love.
 My little babe shall never think with shame,
 Or shrink indignant at his mother's name.
 My own distress, if Heaven prolong his days,
 A just foundation for his welfare lays:
 If beauty's eye, in some appointed hour,
 Should prove the wondrous greatness of its power,
 And all his actions honestly proclaim
 An object worthy, and a real flame,

My full consent shall wait upon his voice,
 And all the mother sanctify his choice.
 O that each parent happily might know
 How much affection forms our bliss below!
 Each sterner air of tyranny might lose,
 And he that weds have liberty to choose.
 The needle *fancy* veers with every wind,
 And has no North within the human mind;
 No settled point our inclination knows,
 But turns as passion or as humour blows.
 Hence if the virgin or the lover's name
 Be clear and spotless in the book of fame,
 If no one moral sentiment forgot
 Could ever mark their actions with a blot,
 How far the knot is proper to be ty'd,
 The pair that wed are fittest to decide.

POETICAL EPISTLE to J. D. Esq.

YOU ask, dear Jack, at what unlucky time
 I first was pepper'd with the itch of rhyme?
 What impulse first the growing madness bred,
 And fill'd with couplets this unthinking head?
 What idle dream my wandring fancy drove,
 At all to write?—Why, honestly, 'twas love.
 The self-same brat, that every bosom rules,
 And moulds us all to coxcombs or to fools;
 Whose power the very deities confess'd,
 Thought fit to make a conquest of my breast:
 And if the gods submitted to the spark,
 'Twas no great wonder for a lawyer's clerk.
 Near Covent-Garden, as I stroll'd along,
 And whistled out the burden of a song,
 At a shop-door a Milliner I saw,
 Whose looks no pencil possibly could draw!

She

She seem'd a real daughter of the spheres,
 And far surpass'd the pendants in her ears;
 Minerva like th' industrious fair was placed,
 To make a cap most elegantly laced:
 Though Homer, no where, I believe, declares
 The goddess-ladies wore a bit on theirs:
 A nameless something darted from her eyes,
 That gave the sweetest transport and surprise!
 Her face was clean, her arms were very white,
 Her dress was decent, and her air polite.
 A while I ran the lovely wonder o'er,
 And felt a pleasure never felt before:
 A thrill unusual through my bosom stole,
 And found at once a passage to my soul;
 Till business call'd, and in the shop she ran,
 To serve some ribband to a barber's man:
 From that sad hour she triumph'd in my breast,
 Engross'd my thoughts, and sacrificed my rest:
 My former love of mutton chops was gone,
 Two pounds at dinner quickly fell to one;
 Unmoved I saw a buttock or a pie,
 Of which J— F— could not eat more than I;
 For not content, my quiet to subdue,
 She kept my heart, and seized my stomach too.

Then first of all I turn'd my thoughts to write,
 And labour'd out a rebus in a night;
 Or sweated hard Acrostic lines to spin,
 And begg'd the Ledger would admit them in;
 In Songs I breathed a never-ending flame,
 And mention'd *Delia* for my *Sally's* name:
 The tender softness of the cooing dove,
 I found would chime with *constancy and love*;
 The sparkling host that glitter'd in the skies,
 Express'd the *living lustre of her eyes*;
 The nameless nature of a lover's pain,
 Came in with *pity, cruel, and disdain*;

And tortures, dangers, horror, and despair,
 With matchless beauty, and divinely fair:
 From this beginning fortunately came,
 The envied honour of a poet's name:
 Hence first the pride of poetry arose,
 And fix'd a scorn for despicable prose;
 From hence my muse in lyric strains excels,
 At Vaux-Hall Gardens, or at Badler's Wells;
 At S——t's each night, I'm sung with rapture o'er,
 And set the table in an endless roar;
 There sit supreme, the arbiter of wit,
 And teach the very landlord to submit.
 In Baldwin's paper, when the slut appears,
 She sets the fools together by the ears;
 The poet's *scare-crow*, *Churchill*, has annoy'd,
 And drawn a *meaning from the face of Lloyd*;
 Has sent the *brain-bound Murphy* home to write,
 And almost drove that *nothing, Fogg, to fight*.
 This is not all; my proud ambitious muse,
 Was lately censured, by the two *Reviews*,
 They damn'd at once the meanest of my lays,
 And fix'd my title to an *honest* praise.
 Now forty-shilling actors condescend,
 Sometimes to treat me like an humble friend;
 Will kindly say, what won't you sit down here?
 I'll be three farthings in a pint of beer:
 Some share of sense the other lads allow,
 But know not what to think,—they can't tell how:
 Vain of myself, they say I talk too loud,
 And all agree, I'm obstinate and proud.
 Careless of what the busy world may say,
 I'll still go on the customary way;
 Enjoy myself, my tankard, and my friend;
 Not pleased to blame, but wishing to commend:
 Avoid the rock where many thousands split,
 Who vainly strive to show a deal of wit;

Where real sense we find too often runs,
To rude ill-nature, or to flimsy puns;
Where few can please, but many must offend,
Where all may lose, but none can gain a friend.

TOM CARELESS to NED FREEMAN.

An Epistle from Covent-Garden Roundhouse.

HEMM'D round with strumpets, and beset with bawds,
Accustom'd long to perjuries and frauds,
Daughters of infamy, in midnight broils,
Train'd up to "treasons, stratagems, and spoils,"
Forgive the rhyming of a brainless skull,
So flatly sweet, and ravishingly dull;
Dispos'd to tell the frolicks of the night,
And make thee stare with envy, while I write.

At Shakespear's head, the place I always sup,
Near one this morn we soberly broke up;
Left France and Spain to mind their own affairs,
And homeward trudged without the help of chairs.
Here, honest FREEMAN, let me introduce
One exclamation for my private use;
Where pompous sound unmeaningly may shine,
And glare with all the tinsel of the nine;
Swell up at once the subject and the rhyme,
And cast a lustre on the low sublime—
Now for it, NED—Back, recollection, fly,
Come on, ye clouds, and darken all the sky;
Let all the horrors which the muses shed,
Beat in my ears, or rumble o'er my head,
Appear at once poetically dress'd,
And hide my blushes, while I tell the rest.
Bravo, by — Ye bards, say what you will,
Give me a roundhouse for the muses' hill.

Thou know'st the frailty of us all, O NED,
And hatest, like me, a melancholy bed.

I turn'd

I turn'd up Bow-street in pursuit of game,
 My pulse all riot, and my breast all flame;
 Wing'd with desires impatient of delay,
 And met poor SALLY PELHAM in the way,
 But wouldst thou think that rapture-giving fair
 Was now committed to a watchman's care!
 That easy shape, which every eye can charm,
 Was rudely circled by a ruffian's arm;
 That tender breast, where every love has play'd,
 All bare was stripp'd in infamous parade;
 Profanely haul'd at midnight from its down,
 And dragg'd with all the common of the town.
 Justice, let loose, had waved her iron brand,
 And seized on riot with her sternest hand;
 Unfeeling crack'd; in mimic'd virtue's cause,
 The tend'rest fibre of the straining laws;
 And stalk'd terrific at the silent hour,
 In all her TRADING INSOLENCE OF POWER.

Poor SALLY!—Who, O FREEMAN, could withstand
 Her plaintive voice, and supplicating hand?
 I could not, faith—but, fired at what I saw,
 Took one *queer cull* a *plumper* in the jaw;
 The dexter *daddle* gave a second spark
 A quite *strait punch*, and lodged it in the mark;
 While the tight left *scal'd up* another's eyes,
 And bore away triumphantly the prize.—
 But O! pursu'd, how vainly I essay'd,
 My laurels soon were in the roundhouse laid!
 Fast at my heels, without a place to house,
 The *Illioi's** tore 'em from my brows.—
 O'erpower'd by numbers, as historians tell,
 So Rome's great lord, immortal CÆSAR, fell.—
 In vain did SALLY whimper and intreat,
 Haul'd, dragg'd, and elbow'd through the noisy street,

* *Illioi*, a word among the watchmen, when they call for assistance from the several stands.

And used each tender accent to express
 The deepest sense of terror and distress:
 No ray of pity fortunately stole,
 Or beam'd all lovely on a watchman's soul;
 No sense of int'rest listen'd to her prayer,
 Assuaged her grief, or soften'd her despair:
 No plea had force to mitigate her woes,
 For I had struck, and should repent the blows.—

Here safe coop'd up, my FREEMAN, thou may'st guess
 The motley scene of whimsical distress;
 The casual tear in prostitution's eye,
 The 'prenticed murmur, and the rustic sigh.
 Some half-dead strumpet yawning on a chair,
 Nods but to scold, and rouses but to swear.
 Each grace, each charm, which formerly could please,
 Swoll'n by excess, or ravaged by disease;
 Each soft incentive to the lover's flame,
 So strongly blotted like the sense of shame,
 That even rude riot, raging with desires,
 And fever'd o'er with aggravated fires,
 Could only find one *striking something* there,
 One *blasted* look, *brimstonically* fair.—

Reflection, NED, beneficently kind,
 At times *will* rise, and beam upon the mind;
 Hold up the mirror to the villain's view,
 Correctly just, and rationally true.—
 Oft has her ray authoritatively prest
 With force convictive on the guilty breast;
 Shew'd vice the native blackness of her form,
 And curb'd the passions in their loudest storm;
 Th' uplifted dagger from distraction stole,
 And hush'd the wildest hurricane of soul.

What pangs in Heaven's dread vengeance must be laid
 For him, O NED, who violates a maid!
 Destroys some object of sublime desire,
 To quench a spark of transitory fire!

In

In sighs wears out affectually his day,
Kneels to deceive, and worships to betray;
To wound alone shall languish to be blest,
And die—to plant a dagger in her breast.

Wild as I am, no fashionable fame
Can yet consign a scandal to my name;
My breast would shudder at a parent's sigh,
And scorn to pawn her honour on a lie;
Would shrink indignant to profess a fire,
Or seem to beat but where she could admire.
Yet, warm'd with youth, I honestly may rove,
Through all the paths of *habitable* love,
Preserving one just medium in these times,
'Twixt *casual errors* and 'twixt *real crimes*;
Refusing ne'er an *accidental* joy,
But never basely *seeking* to destroy.

For ever hated be the villain's name,
Who brings believing innocence to shame;
Who blasts the blossom of a father's race,
And brings a mother's blessing to disgrace.
The veriest dreg in prostitution's lees,
Worn out with woe, and rotting with disease,
O NED, was once the object of delight,
The joy and comfort of a parent's sight:
The lip, now prompt and ready to blaspheme,
Has once sung praises to its MAKER's name;
But now, undone, the footsteps she has trod
Destroy a fire, and sacrifice a God.—

NED, after all, we must acknowledge this,
That virtue only is the road to bliss.
What nameless raptures must a lover know,
Who sees a fair one exquisitely glow,
Sees native truth give lustre to her charms,
Melt at his touch, and languish in his arms;
On life's sweet pause expire for him alone,
And clasp no other bosom but his own?

But

But here comes T—K—S, honest NED, good-bye,
To pass his word for little SALL and I;
The charming slut in triumph shall be led,
And crown the frolic when we get to bed.

*On bearing some Objections to the high Price of admission to see Mr.
Cox's Museum.*

SAY, whence does this fit of economy spring,
In a gay, an extravagant age!
Where thousands are paid for a Eunuch to sing,
Or a dancer to sweep o'er the stage?

Shall every exotic which Italy fends,
Or France may think fit to disown,
In England be certain of favour and friends,
And Britons be slighted alone?

Is this our exalted regard for a land,
Where kings even boast they were born,
That we pay *native worth* with a miserly hand,
And enrich *foreign apes* whom we scorn?

When JONAS first shew'd us his *beautiful* face,
We vied in contributing stocks,
And gave twice the sum for his tricks and grimace,
Which we grudge to give GENIUS and COX.

On the tawdry design of a dull masquerade,
To the wildest expences we go,
And think that our guinea is very well paid,
If a room is but changed at SOHO.

Yet when all the richest perfections of art,
Are effulgently pour'd on our sight;
When national virtue herself tells the heart,
To mix wonder with honest delight;

When GOLCONDA's whole mines in one wonderful blaze,
At a British enchanter's command,
Start warm into life, as enraptured we gaze,
And are birds, beasts, or men in his hand.

FUGITIVE PIGEONS.

We then shake our heads—"Half a guinea's too high,"
 And against it we gravely determine;
 Yet the very next minute our half guineas fly
 For one tweedle-dum-dee from the SIRMEN.

For shame giddy Britons—O Britons, for shame!

Behold all the nations deride—
 And therefore if dead to the dictates of fame,
 At least dread dishonour through pride.

The man, the magician, the wonder you flight,
 No idle performance displays;
 Nor holds up a glitt'ring gewgaw to fight,
 For the purposes merely of praise.

The miracles here, though so lavishly spread,
 Are work'd with a far nobler view;
 To give modest merit an elegant bread,
 To call wealth and glory to you.

Not a bird's starry plume, not the ray of a flower
 Which Cox's creations contain,
 But yields a rich harvest to industry's hour,
 And extends Britain's trade o'er the main.

No luxury *here* does it tend to increase,
 But its radiance benignantly pours,
 To sweeten the blessings of freedom and peace,
 With the treasure of Indostan shores.

Lo! Cox gives the word, and an absolute soul
 Seems instantly waked in his gems,
 To bid the far GANGES as instantly roll,
 In golden profusion to THAMES.

Nay, the rough rapid TIGRIS, for Cox bends its course,
 And with tribute now furiously foams;
 While the Nile-like EUPHRATES deserting its source,
 For him with fertility roams.

As the sword wildly falls, or the javelin's hurl'd,
Let the hero his victories found;
And claim the applause of a *rational* world,
As he spreads desolation around.

For him let the poet his measures prepare,
O shame on the prostitute pen!
And triumph as nations are plunged in despair,
Or as manacles gall fellow men.

But turn, sweet humanity, turn from the fight,
To glory's most sensible plan,
Where earth's distant region in friendship unite,
And man meets no monster in man.

There Cox shines distinguish'd, and o'er the wide East
A filken dominion maintains;
And giving the fancy an exquisite feast,
Puts the mind into innocent chains.

From self-vaulting CHINA concessions he draws,
Which our arms would ne'er venture to win;
And a more than CONFUCIUS gives absolute laws,
To an absolute Prince at PEKIN.

All hail! noble forcerer, blest be the spells,
Which keep thousands from pain and alarm;
Which drive care and penury back to their cells,
And in excellence rise as they charm.

O blest be that commerce, which blisfully smiles,
As the artist each moment is told;
Which spreads laughing plenty through these happy isles,
And builds even Fame upon gold.

A genius like thine, is it's own great reward,
And all other as trifling must see;
But trust me that none can their country regard,
Who are any ways mindless of thee.

The DISCONSOLATE MILLINER.

A Serio-comic Pastoral.

CELESTIAL nine! who taught the founding lyre,
 To sing a cobbler's, or a monarch's fire;
 The soul-fetch'd sigh with elegance to heave,
 In prose to whimper, or in rhyme to grieve:
 Again strike up the melancholy strain,
 And teach, O teach me sadly to complain:
 Kind interjections graciously bestow,
 The plaintive Ah! and lamentable Oh!
 While *sighs* and *dies* perform a mutual part,
 And join in chorus with a bleeding heart.

White-Conduit groves, and loaf-confuming bowers,
 Where oft I've pass'd the fondest of my hours,
 You heard with joy the lover of my choice
 Abuse the waiter with the loudest voice:
 Then saw him turn importantly on me,
 To spread the butter, and prepare the tea.
 In your blest shades, O kindly let me mourn,
 A gown all greasy, and a cap all torn;
 And what is worse——O how my hair is tost!
 A rival's triumph, and a lover lost.

O faithless Buskin, unrelenting youth,
 Is this thy boasted constancy and truth?
 Where now's the look that fondly could excite,
 Each nameless glow of exquisite delight?
 The borrow'd speech that softly could engage,
 And all th' insipid sweetness of the stage?
 The tender strain that delicately hung
 On fancied Romeo's imitative tongue?
 The humble accent, and the bended knees
 The grasp emphatic, and the raptur'd squeeze?

O fatal night, when first I saw that face
Out-shine the tawdry tinsel of thy lace;
So sweet you look'd, so tenderly you play'd,
You pierced the easy bosom of the maid:
Persuasion sat with love upon the part,
And quickly found a passage to her heart:
Soon was my work thrown negligently by,
My bosom tortured with an aching sigh,
The patch forgot to settle on my face,
And raise some spot secluded into grace.

No borrow'd bloom upon my cheek was spread,
Or blush that deepen'd with a studied red;
But pining grief and melancholy care,
Swell'd in my eyes, and languish'd in my air;
My former peace unfortunately stole,
And struck a pleasing sadness through my soul;
My business now grew hateful to my sight,
I sigh'd and long'd impatiently for night;
Shone in the box, whene'er you play'd a part,
And broke my fortune, while I lost my heart.

But O how blest! when you perceived I burn'd,
To see my fondness tenderly return'd;
Where did I stop my sentiments to prove,
Or shew th' unbounded greatness of my love:
The three blue balls in Russel-street can tell,
No doating woman ever loved so well:
Thy home, false youth, these tickets can expose,
Say, who released the crimson suit of cloaths;
Redeem'd from pawn the breeches and the hat,
Or bought the shirts and stockings—tell me that?

Yet, O forgetful! Nancy has possess'd,
The highest place in that ungenerous breast;
She now can seem engaging in your sight,
And charm your easy fancy. What a fright!

Why,

Why, both her eyes stand goggling in her head,
 Her breath's quite odious, and her hair quite red;
 The scurvy too has studded o'er her nose,
 And then, good Lord—how she does turn her toes!
 Perfidious wretch! though fatally disgraced,
 I laugh to view the object of your taste.

Of sense, of wit, of decency bereft,
 Blush, blush, and see the woman you have left;
 Was it for this—how gladly would I stop,
 Ye gracious Powers! I parted with my shop:
 The sweetest house, the most convenient stand,
 And tipt you all the ready in your hand:
 Was it for this I swore through thick and thin,
 And all my honest creditors took in?
 White-wash'd, when all my struggles had been past,
 To be forsaken, and despised at last?

But this new outrage shall be dearly paid.
 See what a frightful spectacle I'm made?
 Yes, Mrs. Nancy, justice shall take place,
 For all these various bruises on my face;
 My cloaths all torn in tatters on my back,
 My lips all bloody, and my eyes all black!
 To Justice Wild, immediately I'll run,
 (I know at once how business may be done)
 Depose against the lady and her spark,
 And quickly nail the justice and the clerk.

Thus sadly mourn'd, in fair White-Conduit's grove;
 A wretched fair one of unhappy love;
 Whose rival nymph offended in that place,
 Had left the marks of vengeance on her face;
 While Buskin laugh'd to see them both exposed,
 Yet never once politely interposed,
 Till her opponent Nancy taught to yield,
 And bravely flood the mistress of the field;

For brandy call'd most resolutely bold,
And drank a quartern, to avoid a cold.

The PENNYLESS POET.

YE ruthless stars, to whom so oft in vain
I nightly pour the melancholy strain;
Ye echoing caves which frequently have stole
The secret anguish of my tortured soul,
Give me again my sorrows to relate,
And chide the strange perverseness of my fate:
Nor thou, chaste empress of yon lucid sphere!
Avert the soft and pity-giving ear;
My griefs at least with tenderness endure,
And kindly listen, if thou canst not cure!

Ye saucy sluts, ye ballad-singing jades,
Raised up to virgins and Aonian maids;
What have I done, your anger to excite,
That thus I'm doom'd incessantly to write,
Some languid strain eternally to choose,
And fall a victim to the Two Reviews?
O! that this restless impulse of the mind
To humble trade was modestly confined!
That moss-grown caverns, and that purling rills,
Were turn'd to entries and accepted bills;
That it had pleased the pocket-picking Nine
To hang my name upon some harmless sign,
Where plodding sense, just muddying o'er its lees,
Had sold tobacco, or the choicest teas;
Then bright-eyed peace had settled near my door,
And scatter'd all her roses on my floor;
Fine loins of beef had constantly been stored,
And port, all rubied, dignified my board;
No scanty chop had sounded in my ear,
No chalk'd up loaf, or miserable beer:

My

My belly then to credit might have grown,
 And proudly swell'd with fodder of its own;
 Raised up, perhaps, the now dejected bard
 Had shone as Common-council for the ward;
 At vestries talk'd of dinners and expence,
 And cast a lustre upon City sense,
 'Till some few years of trial had been past,
 And soar'd, perhaps, to Deputy at last.

Now let me change, O misery! the scene
 To what I am, from what I might have been!
 And see for once if Helicon can fire
 Like CALVERT's *best*, or PARSONS's *entire*:
 Which way kind fortune must a poet go
 To shun distresses, and to fly from woe?
 Which way direct his stomach, and his feet
 T' avoid the bailiffs, or to find a treat?
 How point the fearful motion of his eyes,
 To be at once both fortunate and wise?
 In what snug corner shall he sily drop,
 Escape a writ, and feast upon a chop?
 Say, sons of pride, if despicable stalls,
 Uncurtain'd flockbeds, and unpaper'd walls,
 Old crazy floors, which wretchedness should dread,
 And shelves quite guiltless of a crum of bread,
 All cobweb'd casements, which the studying brain
 Has half-bepapered to resist the rain,
 If pining want and misery can please,
 Or give the bosom but a moment's ease?
 Think then what subject can an author choose,
 Or how engage the favour of the muse;
 Like all the fair, from indigence she flies,
 And scorns misfortune's languor-clouded eyes;
 To aching minds puts on her coldest air,
 From sorrow runs, and shelters from despair;
 Think, fated thus, how genius can display
 The breathing sweetness of a tender lay;

Or

Or how on rapture can the poet dwell,
 With nought but grief and horror in his cell?
 How can he mention comfort and repose,
 Or talk of transports which he never knows?
 In every breast bid happiness be known,
 With nought but wild distraction in his own.
 Alas! whoe'er would study how to please
 Must bear a mind contented and at ease;
 No anxious moment should disturb his rest,
 Or rising sorrow rankle in his breast;
 Celestial peace must settle round his lyre,
 And give a sweetness to the poet's fire;
 Protect the living verdure of his bays,
 And fix a title to immortal praise;
 The numbers then in dignity will roll,
 And speak the native feelings of the soul;
 The different passions to their sources trace,
 Rise into form, and gather into grace;
 The latent springs of sentiment impart,
 Improve the judgment, and correct the heart:
 Tell me some bard whose letter-coining name
 Has pass'd quite sterling through the mint of fame;
 If dirty shirts, and seldom-eating jaws,
 Are not too high a purchase for applause;
 Or who on praise's ocean ought to fail
 Through dismal garrets, or a dreadful gaol?
 Yet in some hour how fatally begot,
 Such is the poet's miserable lot;
 Pale-eyed misfortune settles at his door,
 And keeps him always poorest of the poor;
 The mould'ring breeches, and the op'ning shoes,
 Are now the symptoms of the hapless muse;
 Or time-worn hose by poverty refined
 With holes oft coax'd just peeping from behind;
 These are the marks of never dying bays;
 The badge of genius, and the stamp of praise.

M m m

Blush!

Blush! blush! O world! not turn away the ear
 From what unbiased reason ought to hear,
 Are bards alone on praises to be fed,
 Deny'd subsistence, and restrain'd from bread?
 Censured for want of power to delight,
 And yet refused the requisites to write?
 First make them breathe with decency and ease;
 Nor think the wretched have an art to please;
 To make the numbers delicately flow,
 Wipe off the tear from indigence and woe;
 Why genius droops is now misunderstood,
 Were patrons kind, the writers would be good;
 But how, alas! can taste or learning shine,
 When all the poet's labour is to dine;
 Or what delight can those productions give,
 Whose authors only study how to live?

E L E G Y.

Sacred to the Memory of a beautiful young Lady.

THE awful pomp of Delia's funeral closed,
 Whose loss this bosom shall for ever mourn:
 The mind at length a little more composed,
 Shall drop a few reflections o'er her urn.

Receive, blest shade! this tribute of a tear,
 Which falls, alas! unable to restore;
 Nor now disdain the sentiments to hear,
 You never suffer'd to be told before!

Envy herself the character approved,
 And sadly heaved th' involuntary sigh;
 Nor pined to know how Delia was beloved,
 But wept to think such excellence should die.

She

She saw the person, where perfection stole
 A brighter lustre, and an added grace:
 Possess'd a conscious dignity of soul,
 That shone alone superior to the face.

That rose one endless, one continued charm,
 This was exalted, generous, and kind;
 Resistless love delighted in the form,
 And every virtue centred in the mind.

Ah! what avails it to be good or fair,
 Politely bred or fortunately born,
 The striking sweetness of a noble air,
 The cheek vermillion'd with the blush of morn!

The roseate wonders of the face shall fade,
 The magic lustre must forsake the eye:
 In Death's cold arms the graces shall be laid,
 For oh! the loveliest of the fair must die.

Time, for no worth or excellence can save,
 This awful period to the best shall bring;
 Yet boast not now a victory, O grave!
 Nor death, relentless, triumph in thy sting.

Truth this dread pause of nature shall explore,
 And sooth affliction with exalted themes:
 She bids the bosom feel a pang no more,
 And kindly sheds consolatory beams.

Religion lends her salutary aid,
 She shews th' all-gracious Merciful on high:
 And proves, though ashes are to ashes laid,
 The soul, transporting thought! shall never die.

Her sacred lamp leads on the doubtful way,
 Which erring reason could but faintly see;
 Points out the morn of never-ending day,
 Which man shall share, eternity, with thee.

Thy spirit, virtue, with delight she brings,
 To that bright region, to that bliss abode;
 Where all shall see the mighty King of kings,
 And every eye beholds the living God.

The fullest bounty of celestial love,
 The fainted soul shall here completely know;
 And meet that perfect happiness above,
 She vainly labour'd to enjoy below!

E L E G Y.

HA I L dark retreat! in whose secreted gloom
 A wretch despairing may securely rove,
 Lament unseen his melancholy doom,
 And drag the chain of never-hoping love.

Daughter of long accumulated woes,
 That taught this hapless bosom to complain,
 And lost to peace, to comfort, and repose,
 To pine with anguish, and to mourn with pain.

Dejected grief! thou ever-weeping maid,
 The sad companion of my earliest years,
 Beneath the breathless silence of the shade,
 Indulge the painful luxury of tears.

In vain we strive our suff'rings to conceal,
 When worn with sorrows, or with cares oppress:
 Th' unbidden pang insensibly will steal,
 And paint the struggling tortures of the breast.

The drop will fall, unconscious, on the cheek,
 The tongue will falter, and the bosom sigh;
 The strong affliction silently will speak,
 In all, the plaintive language of the eye.

Reason

Reason may then admonish us in vain,
And distant gleams of happiness impart:
But can she think to argue down a pain,
Or heal a wound that rankles in the heart?

When this torn breast a pause from grief shall know,
All-gracious Heaven, in tenderness declare:
Shall hope succeed the bitterness of woe,
Or life be only lengthen'd to despair?

Must death stretch out the everlasting shade,
And love at length give expectation o'er?
Or shall these eyes yet see the only maid
This aching bosom ever could adore?

Has time the white-robed moment in his power
To let me gaze, enraptured, on her charms?
Or fate mark'd out the consecrated hour,
That wafts me back to Leonora's arms?

If kindred minds by sympathy can prove,
Or whisp'ring spirits in our dreams reveal,
The mutual pang of disappointed love,
Congenial bosoms are decreed to feel.

Despair, from mourning Leonora's eye,
No aching drop of tenderness has stole;
Nor heaved the smaller sorrow of a sigh,
That did not plant a dagger in my soul.

In some thick shade, imagined to my eyes,
The weeping virgin a retirement finds,
Relates her anguish to the midnight skies,
And murmurs only to the whistling winds.

She sinks beneath the fury of the storm;
And fancy, only of her terrors made,
Raises the ghastly image of a form
That adds a deeper horror to the shade.

The

The beck'ning spectre stalks before the fair,
Which fear had pictured to her sight alone,
And seems to breathe, dissolving into air,
The new created horror of a groan.

To me, to me, the shrieking virgin cries,
And hopes a refuge from herself to find;
But O! in vain; the phantom as she flies,
Again appears existing in her mind.

But where am I? ah! where indeed! declare
Ye pitying powers, to whom my woes are known,
By oceans parted, tortured with despair,
And doom'd to anguish endless as her own.

CRIMORA: An ELEGY.

Translated from the Erse, with some Alterations.

PALE horror now, through each secluded cave,
A dreary refuge from the tempest finds;
The distant murmur of the faltering wave,
Sinks on the panting bosom of the winds.

The frightened ghost now ventures to return,
Which from the yawning sepulchre had ran;
As if the ashes had forsook their urn,
And crusted all their particles to man.

Yet here, O Connal! has Crimora staid,
Where shudd'ring nature scarcely would remain;
And dared to call for pity from thy shade,
Whom she herself unhappily has slain.

Spirit of him I ever shall revere,
If in the reach of my complaints thou art,
O deign to hear the accents of despair,
The native language of a bleeding heart!

'Twas this curst hand the guilty quiver fill'd,
Which sent my husband to a timeless grave;
Instead of Dargo, Connal it has kill'd,
And slain the man I should have dy'd to save.

For ever hated be the fatal Hour!
For ever dark and comfortless the morn!
No sun to shed its salutary power,
Or mark the circling period I was born.

But let ill-fortune, all array'd in tears,
Be doom'd attendant on the time alone;
The church-yard foreech-owl bode uncommon fears,
And fright the midnight traveller to stone.

Can I reflect on those delightful hours,
Which wing'd with bliss we formerly enjoy'd?
Or hear his name, ye everlasting powers,
And bear to think by whom he was destroy'd?

O noblest spirit of the sweetest youth,
To what extreme is sad Crimora drove!
Is death alone the recompence of truth,
And am I only fatal where I love?

Come, kind distraction, and possess my brain,
One pause from anguish teach a wretch to know;
Let sense for once be sacrificed to pain,
And madness end unutterable woe.

For Connal, bravest of the world allow'd,
Before whose arm no enemy could stand
Beneath this turf lies weltering in his shroud,
And O! lies slaughter'd by Crimora's hand.

Yet, sacred manes of my murder'd lord,
The nameless deed belong'd to fate alone
To pierce that bosom; fate pronounced the word,
And wing'd the dart that first should strike my own.

But

But who shall dare to murmur or complain
Beneath the stroke eternal fate has given?
Shall human reason arrogantly vain,
Presume to tax the righteousness of Heaven?

Daughter of Rivel, though thy faded eyes
But poorly speak a sorrow such as thine;
Yet know, when Heaven thinks proper to chastise,
That man may feel, but never must repine.

For soon the hand of mercy shall bestow
An endless transport in the world of bliss;
And Connal heal the aggravated woe,
The piercing trial thou hast met in this.

A U R E L I A.

An ELEGY.

KIND Inspiration, daughter of the sky,
Descend from heaven, in pity, and declare,
If this sad breast eternally must sigh,
And only beat to anguish and despair.

At this late hour, if story may be read,
The virgin's shade stalks slowly o'er the plain,
And quits the dreary mansions of the dead,
To wake the conscience of some perjured swain.

O! that the grave might furnish me a place,
Where all my pious ancestors are laid,
Before these eyes had seen the villain's face,
By whom my peace and honour are betray'd.

Then had I slept contentedly at rest,
Nor ever known the sorrows I have seen;
Nor would reflection harrow up my breast,
And tear my soul with what I once have been.

No midnight shade then need Aurelia seek,
 To drop a hopeless, a repining tear;
 No conscious blush had reddened on her cheek,
 Or shook her bosom with a guilty fear.

But peace had quickly moulder'd her to dust,
 Ere Belmour made the imprecated vow;
 'Till virtue call'd her spirit with the just,
 Before that bar which must be dreadful now.

Perfidious wretch! how often has he swore,
 With tears that seem'd just starting from his eyes,
 His grateful breast for ever would adore—
 Say, reason, who could listen and be wise.

Too soon he saw his arguments prevail,
 And vow'd he lived but in my smiles alone;
 Alas! I yielded to the flattering tale,
 And thought his heart as honest as my own!

Who could suppose that Belmour would deceive,
 Or think design in such a form was hid?
 Alas! from fondly wishing to believe,
 Too soon I found unhappily I did!

Oh! that no virgin would incline an ear
 To wild professions from inconstant youth!
 But nobly scorn a sentiment to hear,
 That seem'd to laugh at innocence and truth.

For if no just displeasure she reveals,
 Time will convince her dearly to her cost,
 That step by step the sweet delusion steals,
 Till fame and honour are for ever lost.

The female mind may bid its terrors cease,
 Who never made her softer feelings known;
 Nor fear a thought destructive to her peace,
 While prudence tells her to conceal her own.

But if, alas! in some unguarded hour,
 From this advice she madly should depart,
 She gives her lover an unbounded power
 To wound her honour, and to break her heart.

In vain the fair, to such a crisis drove,
 In sense or soul superior will confide:
 For when has reason triumph'd over love,
 Or inclination been subdued by pride?

Say Heaven! to whom my prayer is addrest!
 Why we are subject to so hard a fate!
 That though the easy fondness of our breast
 Be still abused, we never wish to hate.

For e'en this moment, when my grief has stole
 The aching tribute of a falling tear,
 I feel a foolish something round my soul,
 Declare the soft betrayer is too dear.

Alas! the anguish I am doom'd to prove,
 From real passion only can begin;
 For this sad drop proceeds from slighted love,
 And, pardon Heaven! no sorrow for the sin!

But, O! ye powers, remove each softer trace
 That calls his faithless image to my eyes,
 For as I know him infamous and base,
 It is but just I hate him and despise.

C L E O R A.

An ELEGY.

CHILD of affliction! whose sequester'd shade
 Can kindly give the widow'd virgin hail,
 Again receive the ever-weeping maid,
 And hear once more her melancholy tale.

Beneath

Beneath this gloom, at midnight let her rove,
A bosom fraught with anguish to disclose;
For here she told the secret of her love,
And must relate the story of her woes.

Forgive, great object of my first regard,
Almighty cause from whence this world began,
If while the saint enjoys his full reward,
That human nature should lament the man.

And thou, O shade of all my soul held dear,
If in the boundless regions of the air,
Cleora's plaintive accent thou canst hear,
Look down, look down, and pity her despair.

From these fond arms for ever art thou torn,
From these sad eyes eternally removed;
Nor can this breast a moment cease to mourn
The only object which it ever love.

Resistless youth! how excellently form'd!
To love created, and to virtue fired;
Whoever saw him, instantly was charm'd;
Whoever knew him, wonder'd and admired.

His person rose so delicately sweet,
That art in envy and amazement stood;
And then his mind was generous and great,
Sincerely honest, and humanely good.

In taste refined, and elegantly bred,
Politeness always on his air was hung;
For soft persuasion dwelt on what he said,
And more than magic centred on his tongue.

The Muse too led him to her sacred springs,
Which sick'ning envy would herself allow,
Taught him to strike the sweetest of her strings,
And wreathed her freshest laurel round his brow.

FUGITIVE PIECES.

I knew him—loved—and gloried in the fire,
 Nor strove the fond emotion to conceal;
 This bosom scorn'd to cherish a desire,
 Which virtue ever trembled to reveal.

My faith I plighted to the charming youth,
 Nor blush'd my native sentiments to prove;
 The voice of nature was the voice of truth,
 Which virtue gave, and ripen'd into love.

But O! that morn, which made him only mine,
 Array'd in horror, on affliction stands,
 The sun he long'd impatiently to shine,
 And bless the tender union of our hands.

Start, Recollection, backward to thy seat,
 Nor let remembrance on the moment dwell,
 Unless distraction madly may repeat,
 What bleeding love must never think to tell.

Ye sacred powers, in pity tell me this,
 Why I was mark'd to so severe a doom?
 That the same sun which led me on to bliss,
 Should see my husband wedded to the tomb.

Are these the joys that innocence must prove?
 Are these the blessings which your bounty gave?
 That Death must snatch the votary from love,
 And Hymen light his torches for the grave.

O! that the grand immutable decree,
 No partial instance of its care had shewn,
 But sent its awful messenger to me,
 That struck a life much dearer than my own.

No vigils then these fading eyes might keep,
 Which death's cold hand had settled to repose;
 No pitying moon had grieved to see me weep,
 Or rising sun grown weary of my woes.

Thou Cause divine, omnipotent, and dread,
 What nameless crime within my soul appears,
 To doom my love so early to the dead,
 These eyes so soon to never-ending tears?

This madd'ning brain, all-gracious Heav'n defend,
 Nor let me dare presumptuously to blame;
 For O! to question may be to offend,
 But sure to murmur must be to blaspheme.

Yet the Great Power, whose wisdom could bestow
 A sense so sharp and exquisite of pain,
 Will pardon, if extravagance of woe
 Should make a wretch improperly complain.

The FASHIONABLE MURDERER.

An ELEGY.

COME meek-eyed Pity, daughter of the spheres,
 A gleam of hope all-graciously disclose;
 And let this flowing sacrifice of tears
 For once abate the sharpness of my woes!

O must repentance never find relief
 Beneath the stealing tenderness of time?
 Or Heaven, which sees the greatness of my grief,
 Refuse to pardon, or forget my crime?

To nature's last and most tremendous hour,
 Must memory only to distraction live?
 Or can transgression rise beyond the power
 Of Heaven's unbounded mercy to forgive?

O had reflection taught me to behold,
 With just contempt, an action I should scorn,
 I had not now in misery been old,
 Or cursed the fatal moment I was born!

Nor

FUGITIVE PIECES.

Nor had Clarinda wither'd in her bloom,
 Who long with grief and tenderness had strove,
 Fill'd up a timeless chamber in the tomb,
 Or dy'd a victim to despairing love.

Reason had check'd th' unwarrantable fire
 That burn'd too fiercely in unthinking youth,
 And taught the wildest impulse of desire,
 That honour only could exist with truth !

She had stripp'd off each fashionable guise,
 That decks out vice in these politer times,
 And held a mirror to the villain's eyes,
 To shew the native blackness of his crimes.

Just Heav'n ! what shew of reason can we plead,
 Each sacred tie of virtue to disgrace ?
 Or call an honour to confirm a deed,
 However servile, infamous, and base ?

Honour, the highest excellence confess'd,
 Which real goodness ever has refined,
 Bestow'd alone to dignify the breast,
 And reign the strictest godhead of the mind.

Alas ! how well calamity is framed
 To bid the boldest libertine be wise :
 Affliction shrinks to hear an action named,
 Which folly once exalted to the skies.

For O ! unerring justice has repaid
 My studied baseness to Clarinda shewn !
 From sorrow call'd the bosom of the maid,
 And planted all her anguish in my own.

Remembrance, come in horror, and declare,
 How love could first with cruelty begin !
 Or drive the tender virgin to despair,
 Whose heart it once could take such pains to win.

I saw the lily for a refuge seek,
And blend its whiteness in foreboding snows;
The pensive tear hang quivering on her cheek,
And damp the crimson lustre of the rose.

Affliction swell'd her sorrow-clouded eye,
And languid held a melancholy reign;
The aching breast would labour with a sigh,
Yet nobly scorn'd to murmur or complain.

Unpitying still, I saw the mourner grieve,
And waste in tears her solitary day;
For O! I only courted to deceive,
And used her very fondness to betray.

But conscience wakes eternal, though unseen,
To wound the guilty breaking of my vow;
And strongly paints the villain I have been,
By all the wretch which she has made me now.

For Heaven its wrath will certainly reveal,
To scourge the youth whose promises are broke;
And though for life he may be doom'd to feel,
He must allow the justice of the stroke.

MEDITATION.

An ELEGY.

WRAPT in the shade where Meditation lies,
And holds a mental intercourse above;
Come, Truth, and teach a bosom to be wise,
Which mourn'd too long for disappointed love.

What art thou—wond'rous impulse of desire?
Which blooming hope so pleasingly has drest?
Or whence proceeds th' involuntary fire,
Which burns so fiercely in the human breast?

Sweet:

FUGITIVE PIECES.

Sweet inconsistent off-spring of the sky,
 The latent cause in tenderness declare;
 Nor force the heart eternally to sigh,
 And yet conceal the motive of despair.

If Mira's face in every charm is drest,
 Why am I doom'd incessantly to pine;
 Or shall the coldness of another's breast,
 Create this sharp anxiety in mine?

Alas! since Being smiled upon the morn,
 And nature saw how excellent it rose;
 Thy race, O man, to misery was born,
 And doom'd to bear probationary woes.

To easy nature indolently kind,
 From Fate's severe restrictions to depart,
 Gave man a passive tenderness of mind,
 And beauty's sole dominion o'er the heart,

But yet a pang of never-hoping love,
 To time's last moment destined to conceal;
 Is not the only sorrow we must prove,
 The only sorrow we are doom'd to feel.

A latent train of hydra-headed woes,
 From life each dearer benefit have stole;
 Destroy'd the smallest glimmer of repose,
 And damp'd the choicest blessings of the soul.

Perhaps, e'en now, some high distinguish'd name,
 Raised up to grandeur, and enrich'd by place;
 Starts from some new imaginary shame,
 Or only flumbers to a fresh disgrace.

Perhaps, now tortured on imperial down,
 Some scepter'd mourner languishes his hour;
 And sinks beneath the burden of a crown,
 The slave of greatness, and the wretch of power.

Some

Some ill-starr'd youth, whose melancholy moan,
Has vainly sounded in unpitying ears;
Now weeps, perhaps, in bitterness alone,
And gives a lavish freedom to his tears.

Science, which left him polish'd and refined,
Has given a new occasion to complain;
And knowledge only has enlarged his mind,
To make it more susceptible of pain.

No hand, alas ! its kind assistance lends,
To drive misfortune from his lowly door ;
For when, O when did wretchedness make friends !
Or who will seek acquaintance with the poor !

Perhaps, some virgin is this moment led,
All sicklied over with dejected charms,
Compell'd to languish in a hated bed,
And seem quite happy in detested arms.

Wedded to anguish and repining care,
Yet bound to wear no sorrow in her eye ;
And though condemn'd for ever to despair,
Deny'd the humble privilege to sigh.

How dread a picture meditation brings
Of life's unceasing wretchedness below ?
Where the long chain and ordinance of things
Appear so fraught with misery and woe.

Yet rest, my soul, submissively, O rest,
Nor think that virtue has been treated hard ;
This world was made to prove it in the breast,
And not alone intended to reward.

The great first cause, all-gracious, has design'd,
His endless transports for a world of bliss,
To crown a moral rectitude of mind,
And bless obedient righteousness in this.

O o o

Whatever

Whatever ills in this uncertain state,
 Man may frequently have known;
 Spring from no wish or negligence of fate,
 But some unhappy error of his own.

Then, all resign'd, O let him pour his heart!
 And kiss the sharp, but salutary rod!
 Nor, though condemn'd in bitterness to smart,
 Presume to throw the blame upon his God.

The MOURNING MOTHER.

An ELEGY.

FROM Heaven's wide concave, where serenely mild,
 The eye of mercy beams upon the blest;
 Look down, O fainted spirit of my child,
 And view the anguish of a parent's breast.

Yet rather turn from misery and woe,
 Thou dearest offspring of connubial love;
 Nor let a mother's wretchedness below,
 A moment dash the happiness above.

Short-sighted reason, ignorantly vain,
 Who in the womb of distant time could see?
 Or think I ever should have felt a pain
 From that which gave felicity to thee.

O! that some fair unconscious could but form
 The least idea of a mother's part;
 And know, from nature, by what secret charm
 She twists a child so strongly round the heart!

What means can language tenderly employ,
 So just a sense of sorrow to bestow?
 Or who, that has not felt a mother's joy,
 Can frame the least conception of her woe?

O Adeliza!

O Adeliza! in the earliest years,
Which lisping sweetness rattles o'er its toys;
A smile of thine would dissipate my fears,
And fill my bosom with a thousand joys!

How have I gazed till sense has struck the brain
With bliss so strong, so exquisitely high,
That rapture almost border'd upon pain,
And crack'd the straining fibres of the eye.

Maternal fondness frequently would rise
To that extreme, that wonderful degree;
And scarce I breathed an accent to the skies,
But what was sent in tenderness for thee.

Each beam of genius, open and refined,
With what excessive transport would I trace;
And mark how each impression of the mind
Soar'd up at once to dignity and grace.

Ye honour'd dames, high Heaven's peculiar care,
Whose blooming offspring to perfection shine!
Forgive me! if I thought no child so fair,
So truly good and excellent as mine.

A spark of nature tenderly imprest,
The mother's bosom has for ever known;
And found a secret something in her breast,
That gave a partial fondness for her own.

I praised the hour such excellence was given,
And bless'd the happy footsteps I had trod,
Which rais'd so bright an edifice to Heaven,
A living temple to the living God!

Come, memory, come all tortured, and declare
What souls like mine should never cease to know;
For anguish finds a pleasure to despair,
And brood o'er all her amplitude of woe.

Pardon! just Heaven! but where the heart is torn,
 The human drop of bitterness will sear;
 Nor can we lose the privilege to mourn,
 While we are left the faculty to feel.

She was the all which goodness had bestow'd,
 To bear this mortal and uncertain stage,
 To smooth life's weary and fatiguing road,
 And cheer at once infirmity and age.

Her winning softness, and her artless truth,
 The aching tear from misery has stole;
 Supply'd the buried husband of my youth,
 The first and last possessor of my soul.

What scenes of fancied pleasure would I raise,
 Her little race of prattlers to attend,
 And pass the short remainder of my days,
 A grandchild's parent, and a daughter's friend.

No busy care had offer'd to perplex
 A scheme of life so rationally dress'd;
 But to see those the happiest of their sex,
 Whom I esteem'd the fairest and the best.

Then age had kindly silver'd me with hoar,
 And death appear'd a refuge I could trust,
 Whene'er existence labour'd to be o'er,
 Or nature strove to crumble into dust.

Delusive dreams! O redden at these tears!
 Nor ever bloom so wonderfully fair!
 Distraction now for happiness appears,
 And hope alone succeeded by despair!

Religion, come; thou sister of the skies,
 And quickly lift thy salutary rod;
 Nor let this daring argument of sighs,
 So boldly tax the justice of my God!

The ways of Heaven, though seldom understood,
Are still entitled to our highest trust,
Though seeming dark, are bountiful and good,
And though severe, both merciful and just.
Make me then, Great Omnipotent, resign'd,
Thy awful fiat humbly to receive,
And O forgive the weakness of a mind,
Which feels as mortal, and as such must grieve!

EPITAPH on GENERAL WOLFE.

READER,
whoe'er thou art,
approach this Sepulchre with awe;
for know,
it contains all that was mortal of
Major General JAMES WOLFE;
A BRITON,
Who equall'd the first Heroes of his country,
no less in Bravery than in Humanity:
and,
to every splendid characteristic of the Gallant Soldier,
added
every milder Virtue that adorns the Christian,
or dignifies the Man.
At the early age of thirty-three,
he acquired an eminence of Reputation,
seldom gained by the best, or the wisest
during the longest round of years;
and
having greatly answered the most exalted purposes of existence,
the goodness of Providence rendered his death
as glorious as his life;

and

FUGITIVE PIRONS

and called him
in the very moment of victory,
at the very moment, in which,
with a handful of veteran troops,
he conquered Quebec,
and secured the Empire of the Western World
to BRITAIN,
to the only reward which was worthy
of excellence so exalted;
a crown of everlasting felicity.

He fell
near the Heights of Abraham,
on the 18th of September, 1759.
and though the gratitude of a generous nation
justly consider'd his fate a public calamity,
any other would have been less happy,
and less honourable to himself:

He died
with a certainty of being revered to the latest posterity;
and left the mightiest Kingdom of the Earth
to be the grateful Guardian of his
Memory.

General WOLFE was descended
from an ancient and honourable Family
in the County of Kent:
But it is unnecessary to mention his Ancestry,
when the noblest line would have derived Dignity
from his Relation;
and when, in testimony of his unparallel'd worth,
this monument is erected
by the unanimous resolution of the British Commons
assembled in Parliament.

Let no sad tear upon this tomb be shed,
That vulgar tribute to the vulgar dead;

But let the good, the generous, and the brave
 With godlike envy, sigh for such a grave;
 Deeply, indeed, we may lament for those
 Who drawl out being on a dull repose,
 Without one glory moulder into dust,
 At most unscorn'd or negatively just.—
 But since, on nature's never erring plan,
 One certain fate attends the world of man;
 And death, dread paradox! forms all our way,
 To yon bright regions of eternal day:
 He longest lives, who gloriously can claim
 The highest summit of unsullied fame,
 And that kind stroke should preferably prize,
 Which gives the noblest passport to the skies.

ELEGIAC BALLAD.

THOUGH Nancy, unfortunate fair,
 Affects to be calm by degrees;
 Yet, O! do her actions declare,
 That her bosom's one moment at ease.

To the winds will the mourner complain,
 Or seek out some sorrowful shade;
 And eternally talk of the swain,
 By whom she was basely betray'd.

From the night lost to sleep does she rise,
 With a breast only fraught with her fears;
 And the sun never breaks on her eyes,
 But to see them dissolved in tears.

What comfort, alas! can she find,
 For the wound she is doom'd to endure;
 When her grief's the disease of the mind,
 Which no arguments ever can cure.

Her

Her woes the fond wretch may relate,
Whom so fatal a flame can enslave,
Yet find no physician but fate,
And no other relief but the grave.

AN ELEGIAC BALLAD.

O WHERE shall I search after rest,
O where shall I safely exclaim,
Unlock all the woes of my breast,
Yet hide both my guilt and my shame!
Yon moon grows indignantly pale
If I strive to approach her chaste ear;
And sickens to think of a tale,
Which a virgin should tremble to hear.
Can Cynthia look down on my woes,
While this foolish tear which is shed,
For the loss of no innocence flows,
But laments that my lover is fled.
Each ray of content from my sight
High Heaven in justice withdraws,
When I think on my guilt with delight,
And so ardently doat on the cause.
Yet can I reproach the false youth,
Though Townly there once was a time!
Or expect either honour or truth
From the man that occasion'd my crime?
Alas, if a virgin will trust,
Her own is the fault and the blame;
For the man who intends to be just,
Will never seduce her to shame.

SPATTER'S RAMBLES.

TO our parish-church Sunday evening I went,
 With a laudable hope to improve,
 And carried a mind most religiously bent
 On the Author of all things above.

But the temple, alas! which in ages ago
 Had the rage of oppression withstood,
 Now seem'd more a place of amusement and shew,
 Than the fane of a Being so good.

Thou saw'st how the gay and the indolent fair
 Appear'd, gracious Lord, at thy shrine,
 And the maid who would die for an opera air,
 Would not stoop to an anthem of thine.

Some puppy-bepowder'd, or half-headed thing,
 Her attention had foolishly stole,
 And raised more regard for a necklace or ring
 Than th' eternal repose of her soul.

The slave who would worship with pride all his days,
 And attend on a minister's nod,
 Was here quite abash'd to appear in thy praise,
 And ashamed to kneel down to his God.

But, warn'd, O ye thoughtless, of judgment beware,
 Nor your errors so impiously flatter,
 For Heaven will scourge, though a while it may spare,
 Says your friendly adviser—**JACK SPATTER.**

SPATTER'S RAMBLES.

LAST night at the coffee-house happ'ning to sit,
 I was wearied with noise and dispute,
 Quite sick of eternal discourses on Pitt,
 And just jaded to death about Bute.
 A number of heads magisterially great
 In a spirited party were thrown,
 All striving to settle the peace of the state,
 Though they lost every thought of their own.
 The vict'ries of Amherst, the conquests of Hawke,
 Were stretch'd in one wonderful link,
 And fellows were boldly presuming to talk,
 Who were never permitted to think.
 A barber convinced the whole council with ease,
 What a loss from our treaty must spring;
 And a humble retailer of bacon and cheese
 Was employ'd in directing his king.
 O when will discretion in tenderness shed
 One sensible beam on this land!
 And hinder each puppy from troubling his head
 About what he can ne'er understand!
 Come, goddess! O come! and inspire some degree
 Of thy daughter, fair decency's rules:
 Must insolence still be the claim of the free?
 Or shall liberty mould us to fools?
 Such only should talk and discourse of the state
 Who are perfectly versed in the matter,
 In others 'tis boldness or folly to prate,
 Take the word of—your humble—**JACK SPATTER.**

The T E A - C U P.

A FABLE.

A S Belmont o'er his evening tea,

A happy hour enjoy'd;

With Delia's lip made pretty free,

And with her bosom toy'd;

He strove to steal his charmer's cup,

But turning quickly round,

Just as he snatch'd the plunder up,

He dropp'd it on the ground.

The fair beheld him at a stand,

And smiling saw it broke;

Then gently taking up his hand,

She press'd it as she spoke;

"Observe th' uncertain state, my dear,

"Attending human life;

"Nor blush, my only love, to hear

"A moral from a wife.

"Our hope is but a China-cup,

"That only strikes the view;

"And though it swells the bosom up,

"Is full as brittle too.

"But now it would be something hard,

"So soft a hope should miss;

"Then seize, my life, your own reward,

"I won't deny a kiss.

P P P

REMARKS

REMARKS on SONG-WRITING.

AS the poetical compositions of the present age are principally of the lyric order, it may not be unnecessary to observe what kind of measure is best adapted to that species of writing, and perhaps an endeavour to fix a standard for it, may not be wholly unacceptable.

First then, our songs should have an agreeable variation in the measure, for a monotony in writing will frequently render a very chaste performance heavy and unentertaining; the ear is too apt to fatigue under an eternal repetition of the same sound; and a number of compositions, otherwise really elegant, have fallen into neglect, or sunk into disesteem, from this very cause. But as dry observation only is seldom accompanied with the force of example, I shall give an instance that will serve to set this affair in a light considerably clearer.

The following little song is written in eight syllable verse:

O Damon, still you strive in vain!
My breast preserves its just disdain:
And though the pang perhaps I prove,
I scorn to share the guilt of love.
Is this, ye powers, his only aim?
And would he wound Clarinda's fame?
To blast a name can he intend,
His very honour should defend?
Perfidious too, like all the rest!
O! can he think to stab a breast
That fondly beats for him alone,
And wears no image but his own!
O, for a thought so meanly base!
That heart that could admire his face,
The ungrateful youth shall surely find
Can still detest him for his mind.

This manner of writing it, though strictly agreeable to the rules of modern composition, is nevertheless heavy and unaffecting; neither the
delicacy

delicacy of the sentiment, nor the purity of the rhymes, can hinder that air of languor which generally breathes through this kind of measure; and the thought itself is deprived of its principal force and beauty, from the coldness of the expression. Let us, however, see what effect it will have in alternate rhymes of the same length of syllable,

O Damon, still you strive in vain!

Clarinda's fix'd resolve to move:

Her heart, alas! may feel the pain,

But justly scorns the guilt of love.

Is this, ye powers, his boasted flame?

O say, is this his only end?

And can his love destroy the fame

His truth and honour should defend?

Perfidious too like all the rest!

O say, can Damon then be grown;

And will he seek to wound a breast

That fondly beats for him alone?

O for a thought so meanly base!

Th' ungrateful youth shall surely find,

The heart that could admire his face,

Can still detest him for his mind.

The judicious reader will easily perceive the alternate rhyme has given a beauty to the thought, which the unvarying jingle of the former versification could by no means admit of; yet he will also find, that even this method of writing wants a particular something to make it more pointed and expressive. The second and last line of every stanza, he will observe clogged with an unaccountable weight of syllable; and though in all probability he might be induced to think the composition has a good deal of *pretty*, he will find very little of the *striking* about it, or in plain English, though he may find nothing to *condemn*, he will meet with nothing to *admire*.

To remove this inconvenience, therefore, suppose we make one effort more, and try what effect the shortening of the second and fourth line may have.

O Damon,

O Damon, still you strive in vain,
 A fix'd resolve to move;
 My heart, alas! may feel the pain,
 But scorns the gulf of love.

Is this, ye powers, his boasted flame?

Is this his only end?

And can his love destroy the same?

His honour should defend.

Perfidious too like all the rest,

Is faithless Damon grown!

And can he seek to wound a breast

That beats for him alone?

O for a thought so meanly base!

Th' ungrateful youth shall find,

That heart that could admire his face,

Can hate him for his mind.

In this specimen of measure, the disagreeable consonance of the first eight syllables with the second is avoided, and two unnecessary syllables are removed from that line, and the last of every verse; by which means the length of the first and third have a more pleasing effect upon the ear, and give an additional force of point and spirit to every second and fourth. The reader, upon a slight review, will find a surprising difference between all eights, and eights and sixes; and from the instance before his eyes, pronounce his determination in favour of the latter.

All songs of delicacy and sentiment should be particularly written in this measure, where every stanza, without injuring the thought, has an opportunity of concluding with the force of an epigram; and by striking the imagination with an agreeable surprise, is certain of an easy remembrance. There is another species of measure, not frequently made use of in sentimental songs, and of which indeed the half of our modern pretenders to poetry have little or no conception, and that is elevens and eights; as for instance,

His

His collars with true hospitality stores,
Give a welcome most cordially warm;
For plenty and freedom preside at his board,
And contentment takes care of the farm.

But there is one material inconvenience to which this kind of measure is exposed, and that is, as in the very stanza before us, that though eleven and eight syllables should confine the expression, the second and fourth lines frequently runs into nine, because the verse must be repeated pretty quick, which is sometimes totally impossible, without trespassing on the good nature of the reader, and the occasional use of this auxiliary syllable.

Eleven syllables in every line will produce a disagreeable length of writing, and give few opportunities of shewing a well-conceived sentiment, dress'd up in the sterling force of point and brilliancy. Perhaps there is not a better song in any language than

“ When first by fond Damon Flabella was seen.”

yet the lines have an apparent heaviness that is not a little prejudicial to the beauty of the thought. The same sentiment in eights and sixes would have received a much greater advantage, and be more universally admired, where, to the delicacy of conception, the author might have added all the force of an epigram.

Mr. Dryden, in his *Cymon and Iphigene*, has made use of a species of measure much esteemed amongst a number of song-writers, that is a six line stanza, four lines of eight syllables each, with one of six at the middle and end, as in

The stream that glides in murmurs by,
Whose glassy bosom shews the sky,
Completes the rural scene;
But in thy bosom, charming maid,
All heaven itself is sure display'd,
Too lovely Iphigene.

But though the imagination may be a little relieved by this method of introducing the middle and concluding line to occasion the variety,

yet sixteen syllables in the *mechanism* of poetry must generally be productive of unnecessary epithets, and disagreeable expletives, and dress a thought up in the tinsel of harmony, without any pretension to taste or magnificence, that will produce a load of expression impossible to be avoided: and we here see one of the greatest poets that ever lived sinking under its weight, and endeavouring to support himself by a needless admiration and unnecessary rapture. There are few songs more admired than this celebrated quotation of Cymon and Iphigene, yet with the deepest veneration for the abilities of its admirable author, I must confess I know nothing in language more affected or less elegant.

I shall conclude my remarks upon measure with one instance more of a species of alternate eights, which have been sometimes successfully used; but being liable to a swiftness in the expression, are subject to the same inconvenience of elevens and eights, and should be introduced with equal caution; for instance,

Then innocence, daughter of truth,
All the laws of discretion obey'd;
For she guided the hope of the youth,
And directed the wish of the maid.

The voice would inevitably hang at the end of the first line on the word *truth*, if the monosyllable *all* was not introduced at the beginning of the second, where it exceeds the limited measure of the line, and is of no other use than to assist the reading.

Upon the whole, an author of any taste will see that eight and six syllables are the best calculated, from the many instances we have produced, and the reasons we have given, not only to preserve the smoothness and harmony of his lines from languor and heaviness, but also to assist the force, and heighten the beauty of the expression. The lines in that measure are less liable to run into one another; a circumstance that destroys the elegance of any composition; and where they should be unfortunately subject to such an error, the voice, being capable of pronouncing two lines of fourteen syllables without resting in some manner, happily conceals it.

S O N G.

S O N G.

YOU ask what charm in Nancy's face,

This foolish heart has stole:

Nor can I name one striking grace—

Not I, upon my soul;

But there's a certain something there

This bosom must adore:

A something not exactly fair,

And yet extremely more.

A finer face perhaps may try,

A greater share of art:

And yet can only touch the eye,

But never strike the heart:

Less native force experience sees,

Attends a fairer form;

For that can only hope to please,

But never think to charm.

But say my passion is misplaced,

I live for her alone:

And which must I consult, your taste,

Or gratify my own?

Our friendship, if you kindly cease,

Your silence best secures:

Nor think, I can destroy my peace,

To please a whim of yours.

S O N G.

To the Hon. Miss B—.

FOR ever, O! merciless fair,

Will that cruel indifference endure?

Can those eyes look me into despair,

Yet that breast be unwilling to cure?

If I love, must you doom me to die?
 If I kneel, will Maria upbraid?
 And a smile, O say, can she deny
 To the wretch which her beauty has made?

Relentless to know how I grieve,
 Yet seem quite unmoved at my pain;
 And so far from a thought to relieve,
 That she scarcely will hear me complain.

How oft what I felt, to disguise,
 Has my reason presumptuously strove,
 Till my soul almost fell from my eyes,
 In the tears of the tenderest love.

Or till longer unable to flow,
 By the torture's excess which I bore,
 That exhausted I sunk with my woe,
 And only recover'd to more.

Then, Maria, determine my fate,
 Nor let me to madness be drove;
 But O! do not tell me you hate,
 If you even resolve not to love.

The ANSWER.

To Captain L——.

THOSE fond complaints, unhappy youth,
 For pity's sake give o'er,
 I can but weep for so much truth,
 And wish I could do more.

Th' excess of unabating woe
 This tortured breast endures,
 Too well, alas! must make me know
 The grief which dwells in yours.

For

For doom'd like you to mourn, in vain
 I seek the darkest grove;
 Condemn'd to feel the sharpest pain
 Of disappointed love.

My wasted day, in endless sighs,
 No sound of comfort hears;
 And morn but sees Maria's eyes
 To wake her into tears.

Then cease thy suit, fond youth, O cease!
 And blame the fates alone;
 For how can I restore your peace,
 Who quite have lost my own?

S O N G.

The Candid Declaration.

I N vain this emotion of nameless desire
 I strive, O Amanda, to hide!
 For my looks will discover how much I admire,
 And betray every art of my pride.

How oft have I sported and laugh'd at a flame
 Which I heard other blockheads declare;
 And seem'd to look down, gentle love, on thy name,
 And despise every thought of despair?

But now by some whimsical demon possess'd,
 As doating a fool, am I grown;
 For love has seized hold of this obstinate breast,
 And has made it as soft as his own.

Yes, matchless Amanda, I gazed too unwise,
 When I knew how perfection allures;
 And fondly drank in with those passionate eyes,
 All the tender contagion of yours.

With something bewitching that face was replete,
 And to charm every fancy design'd,
 While each sentiment rose both exalted and great,
 And each accent polite and refined.

No more can I think any wish to conceal,
 For an object so near to divine?
 But beg that your bosom would tenderly feel
 For the softer sensations of mine.

S O N G.

NO nymph of the plain I can find,
 With my own little wench to compare,
 No maid is so gentle and kind,
 Or so sweetly engaging and fair.

No praise has she e'er strove to gain,
 At the strictest discretion's expence;
 Though generous, never was vain,
 And though witty, she always has sense.

Though her brightness she possibly took
 From the radiant effulgence of noon;
 Yet she'd blush to behold such a look
 As Endymion received from the Moon.

She's one complication of grace,
 Without vanity, falsehood, or art;
 And possesses the loveliest face,
 With the best and the gentlest heart.

How blest am I, shepherds declare,
 Who my fondness for Mira have known;
 Since a maid so deserving and fair,
 I can honestly say is my own.

S O N G.

The tender Resentment.

RELENTLESS youth! O tell me why
 My life you can pursue,
 And see the wretched Delia die,
 Because she doats on you!

O why, to act so mean a part,
 Can Damon now begin,
 Or strive to break a virgin's heart,
 He took such pains to win!

O think—but let these fading eyes
 Their midnight vigils keep;
 The beam of morn unnoticed rise,
 And still behold her weep!

Yet Delia never will upbraid
 A swain who poorly flies;
 He may forsake the injured maid,
 But never shall despise.

S O N G.

The Summit of human Felicity.

NEAR Richmond's bright vales, in a charming retreat,
 A mansion engagingly stands;
 Not expensively raised but commodiously neat,
 And possesses some neighbouring lands.

There Belmour with matchless Clarinda retired,
 From life's noisy glare has removed;
 By the villas around both esteem'd and admired,
 And at home both respected and loved.

With

With his soul's dearest partner, the morn does he pass
 In the sweetest enjoyment and ease;
 And at dinner some well-chosen friends o'er a glass
 Are allow'd to do just what they please.

His cellars with true hospitality stored,
 Give a welcome most cordially warm;
 For plenty and freedom preside at his board;
 And contentment takes care of the farm.

The poor at his presence throw wretchedness by,
 Their blessings alone to employ;
 The heart of the fatherless ceases to sigh,
 And the widow's is leaping for joy.

Thus reaching the summit of all human bliss,
 With no care is he ever perplex'd;
 But happily glides through a life such as this,
 To meet endless delight in the next.

S O N G.

The injured Husband.

WHAT friendly ray, in pity drest,
 O say, can hope bestow!
 To give distraction sight of rest,
 Or sooth eternal woe?

Life's little lamp, one tender beam,
 To grief no more can spare;
 But faintly turns a dying gleam
 On anguish and despair.

Look down unending source of fate,
 From yon obedient skies;
 And O instruct a wretch to hate
 The fair he must despise.

Whatever

Whatever tortures rend his breast,
 Whatever conflicts roll,
 Teach him to tear her from his breast,
 And root her from his soul.

Once pure as winter's whitest snow
 She gave her sacred vow!

Once pure as innocence——But, O
 Just Heaven! what is she now?

Then grant a wish, indulgent fate,
 On which my heart is set;
 Or if I must not think to hate,
 O let me but forget!

S O N G.

The humorous Expostulation. To a Lady.

IF I approach, with downcast eyes,
 And humbly beg relief,
 Each plaintive accent you despise,
 And smile at all my grief.

If I assume a look more gay,
 And use a loftier strain,
 Then every thing is rude I say,
 And every reason vain.

How many a billet-doux I've sent,
 Penn'd with how many a sigh;
 Yet never did you once relent,
 Or make one kind reply.

To cross my love thus every way
 Is really monstrous hard;
 For who has any heart to play,
 While you trump every card?

S O N G.

FUGITIVE PIECES.

S O N G.

The Reflection.

O TELL me no more of the fir-shaded hill,
 Where contentment securely might grow,
 Nor mention the murmuring sound of the rill,
 Which bubbles so sweetly below.

The grove's smiling verdure no longer can please,
 Though so gay and enchantingly fair;
 Nor reason talk down a fond bolom to ease,
 Which is tortured with love and despair.

A wound which the hand or the head may endure
 A relief from the lancet may find;
 But say, what physician can e'er think to cure
 The latent disease of the mind?

In vain all the force and extent of his art
 The medical blockhead applies;
 For love will for ever reign over the heart,
 Till nature deprives us of eyes.

S O N G.

The judicious Lover.

THO' that face, matchless Nancy, may blush like the morn,
 And fill us with love and surprise;
 Yet think not, my dear, that an insolent scorn
 Is an absolute mark of the skies.

The Graces with lustre unequal'd may shine,
 But an honest admirer will find,
 That the tints of the cheek are not half so divine
 As the beauties which spring in the mind.

A lip

A lip pouting ripe, or a ringlet of hair,
 With indiff'rence I oft have withstood,
 And spoke of a face the most perfectly fair,
 As a compound of mere flesh and blood.

To no sad extreme of despair ever drove,
 My sentiments once did I hide;
 Or think the poor nonsense of beauty and love
 An excuse for ill-nature and pride.

The virgin for whom I am fated to sigh,
 Must be wholly divested of art,
 Must have all the Graces to beam in her eye,
 And the virtues to dwell in her heart.

Her breast with that exquisite fire must be fraught,
 Which on mine has so tenderly stole,
 That thought, all transported, may meet against thought,
 And soul fondly spring up to soul.

For should I, alas! be condemn'd to admire,
 Where my reason could once disapprove,
 In the flame this mad bosom should sooner expire,
 Than breathe out an accent of love.

S O N G.

The Reasoning Lover.

I N vain does my dearest Clarinda bestow
 A pity so prompt to deceive,
 And constantly seem so distress'd at a woe
 Which she never inclines to relieve.

R r r

What

What though on her beautiful cheek the big tear
 An anxiety plainly may prove;
 Yet how poor must the language of friendship appear,
 Or the doating conception of love?

Can the lifeless word *pity*, so coldly express,
 Bid the wretch's distraction depart?
 Or drive out the wish that springs up through the breast,
 And grows round the strings of the heart?

That look, O Clarinda, so form'd to express
 A concern for the griefs which I bear,
 Serves only to swell up the flood of distress,
 And to make me in love with despair.

Then O teach that bosom, my angel, to beat
 With a soft, a most exquisite sigh;
 Or put on an air less engagingly sweet,
 That at once may command me to die.

S. O. N. G.

To Miss NANCY MARKHAM.

WHY yes, my dear Nancy, 'tis just as you say,
 The men are all apt to deceive;
 But are not the ladies as faulty as they,
 Who're so foolishly prompt to believe?

When a fellow kneels down to some ordinary face,
 To breathe a few passionate sighs,
 And talks of vermillion, of lilies and grace,
 Of daggers, and Cupids, and eyes;

When

FUGITIVE PIECES.

191

When he runs o'er the part which is constantly play'd,
O love, in thy common-place school;
And dies at the strain of some raven-voiced maid,
And praises the wit of a fool:

Who's then most to blame, prithee tell me, my dear,
Nor look with so rigid an eye;
The virgin so weakly attentive to hear,
Or the lover so ready to lie?

True merit and beauty, though frequently won,
Have no need to be flatter'd, sweet maid:
Discretion and prudence are rarely undone,
And the virtues but seldom betray'd.

But if the fond fair one the bait strives to seize,
And too fatally tender has grown;
Her swain let her curse, or condemn if she please,
But the folly is chiefly her own.

S I M I L E

S O N G.

To a Gentleman in love with a Lady of bad Character.

O N Delia's cheek though every grace
Appears so free from art,
Yet who can love the faultless face,
That knows the faithless heart.

Can she profess to any youth
A just and honest flame;
Or have the smallest sense of truth,
Who lost the sense of shame?

I

No,

FUGITIVE PIECES.

No, Freeman, no; and much I fear
The nymph was never known,
Who held a husband's honour dear,
And sacrificed her own.

Alas! fond man, no sacred rite
Polluted breasts can bind;
Nor Hymen burn his torches bright
Within the guilty mind.

'Tis better far each rising morn
The tortured breast should goad,
Than wed and have remorse and scorn,
To aggravate the load.



F I N I S.

S O N O



